

A HISTORY
AND
DESCRIPTION
OF
THE OLD
FRENCH
LAINCE

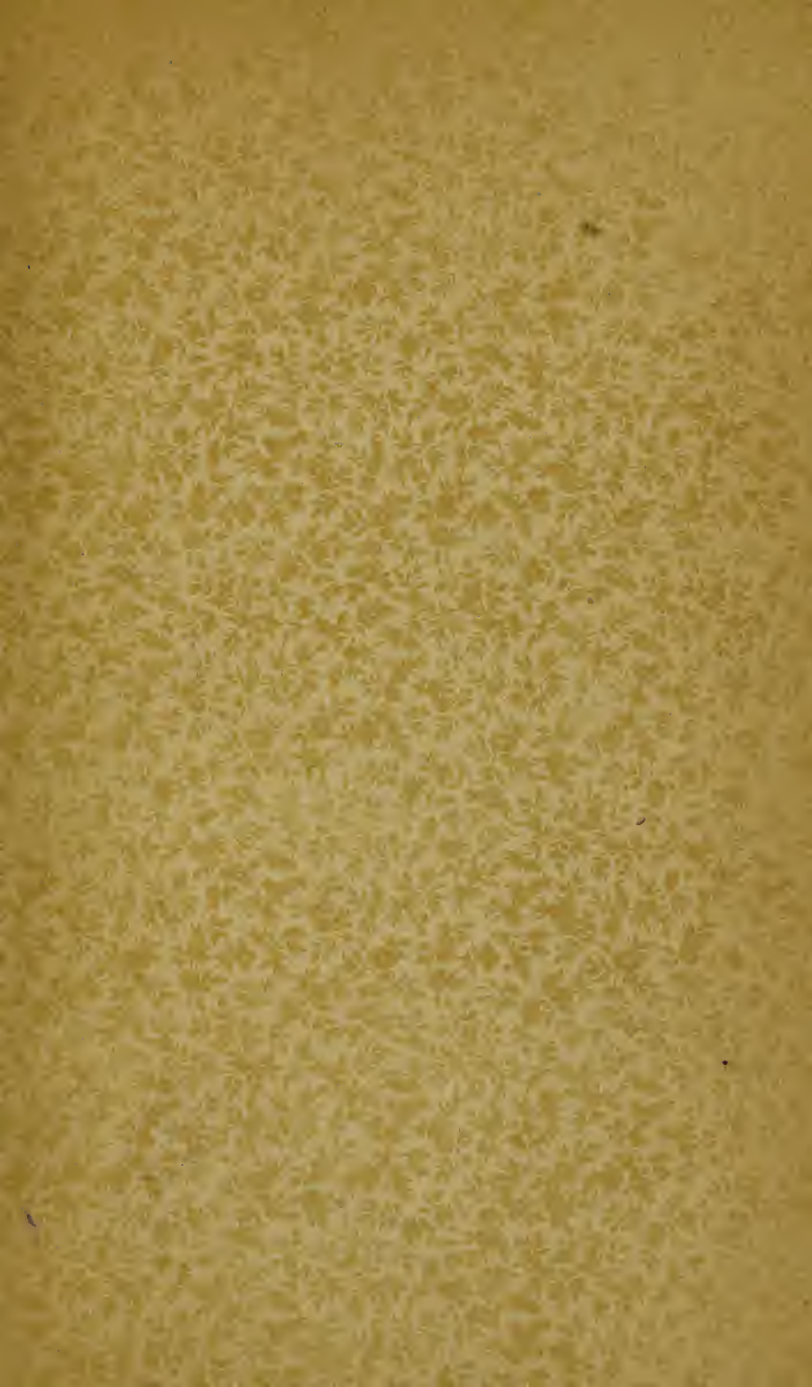
M. L. SOLON

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A
HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION
OF
FRENCH FAÏENCE

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PLATE I.

HENRI II. WARE, OR SAINT-PORCHAIRE FAÏENCE.

Candlestick.

H. $12\frac{5}{8}$ in. D. of base, $6\frac{1}{2}$ in.

À
HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION
OF
THE OLD
FRENCH FAÏENCE

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE REVIVAL OF
FAÏENCE PAINTING IN FRANCE

BY
M. L. SOLON

WITH A PREFACE BY
WILLIAM BURTON, F.C.S.

AUTHOR OF "ENGLISH PORCELAIN," ETC.

*CONTAINING TWENTY-FOUR PLATES IN COLOURS, TOGETHER
WITH REPRODUCTIONS OF MARKS AND NUMEROUS
ILLUSTRATIONS*

CASSELL AND COMPANY, LIMITED
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P R E F A C E.

JUDGING by the number and importance of the specimens of French Faience preserved in our public and private collections, English collectors and connoisseurs have shown the greatest interest in this fascinating product of the potter's skill. It is, therefore, surprising to reflect how little we have contributed in the way of research, or even of written record, to the history of its development; of the fortunes of the potters who made it; or of the workshops in which it was made. With the exception of occasional articles, of short notices in the general histories of pottery, of a life or two of Palissy which are practically valueless from our point of view, we have nothing to show but the handbook of the collections in the Victoria and Albert Museum, and that is now all but twenty years old. In France, on the contrary, where every branch of the history of pottery has received so much attention, it was but natural that this particular branch, in which the artistic tendencies of the French people had so clearly proved themselves, should receive especial attention. Every centre of production—and they are to be numbered by the score, if not, indeed, by the hundred—has found, during the last fifty years, its patient and enthusiastic historian. Their labours have preserved for us—indeed, in many cases have rescued from oblivion—the names, the places, and the dates of the makers and decorators of the wares that served the needs of the poor, or ministered to the luxury of the rich, throughout the length and breadth of France for more than two centuries. At times, no doubt, one has the feeling that the enthusiasm of the writer, collector, or connoisseur

has run away with the historian, but much may be forgiven to these patient and ingenious scholars, for their works are a real contribution, if not to the history of France, at least to the history of French taste and French art, from the age of Francis I. and the Renaissance to that of the Revolution. From the time when pieces of the Henry II. ware or the dishes of the Bernard Palissy were made only for princes or for kings, to the time when the common people purchased, in the market-places of France, dishes and plates decorated with rudely-painted emblems of the Revolution, what a profusion of gaily-coloured and attractively decorated wares had been poured from the kilns of Nevers, Rouen, Moustiers, Strasburg, and their offshoots! The very names are a delight to the connoisseur, recalling visions of painted vases, richly or elegantly decorated plates and dishes, or some little ornamental piece of elegant fancy, that found its fitting place in an eighteenth century boudoir. To the historian of the potter's art they recall no less clearly, with their endless variety and charming modifications, how the technique of the Italian majolica maker, which had been itself caught from the East, was handed down—changed in detail, it is true, but with all its broad features unaltered—to the age of steam machinery; only to disappear between the rivalry of the finer porcelains of France and the practical, matter-of-fact earthenwares of England.

As we have said, all this history has been worked out, in minute and exhaustive detail, in France, but the English collector or student has little opportunity of perusing all these volumes of written history. It is now his good fortune to have a carefully-digested account of the whole subject, from the hand of one who has collected and studied, as a labour of love, all that has been written; who has examined not only as a student, but as an artist and a potter, the collections of Europe, and whose lifelong labours as an artist in pottery give him the right to pronounce such authoritative opinions as are set forth in the following pages. We are grateful to the men who have laboured at the history of each

factory or group of factories in detail, but we must be still more grateful to the man who examines and digests for us their often ill-assorted information, who, looking at the subject as a whole, reduces each part to its due proportion, and finally gives us a living sketch of the entire movement, which enables us to place the old French Faïence in its true place in the history of the potter's art.

It may be permissible to direct attention to some of the salient features in Mr. Solon's treatment of his subject. For the first time in an English book the mysterious and fascinating Henri II. ware has been discussed in the light of the latest French discoveries and views, and, with a caution that is surely necessary, Mr. Solon now proposes to restore the old designation of Henri II. ware to what has been variously described as "Faïence d'Oiron" and "Faïence of Saint-Porchaire." For the first time, too, in any work on pottery, the productions of Bernard Palissy are placed in something like their real position. The history of this great but unsystematic experimenter has received so much attention from writers who were merely men of letters; his arduous struggles, his broad and advanced scientific views, and the final calamity of his strenuous life, have made of him such a legendary hero, that it has seemed something like heresy to suggest that his pottery was neither very beautiful in itself, nor had added much to the forward march of the potter's art. In a sketch as kindly as it is discriminating, Palissy's doings as a potter, apart altogether from his doings as a man, are adequately dealt with, and we realise how little influence his work had on the development that took place in French pottery in the succeeding years. That the true French Faïence, of light red or yellow-coloured clay, covered with an opaque tin enamel, had its origin in the wares imported from Italian workshops has long been known. How many fruitless efforts, in widely separated places, had their little day of partial success, and then fell into failure and oblivion for lack of influential support, Mr. Solon now tells us. Success was only to come in the train of princely patronage, as we learn

from the first real establishment of a French Faïence at Nevers, which was to endure with varying fortune for more than two centuries. Following the thread of history, we are clearly shown how the artistic taste, which seems inborn in the French workman, was to take the technique of this transplanted industry, and use it again in designs and decorations much more in keeping with pottery than those of contemporary Italian workmen. There is a profound truth in the statement that the final development of the art of Majolica painting in Italy "was too much akin to fresco and oil painting to be substantially a ceramic process." It was, indeed, too pictorial to be truly decorative, too ambitious for such a fragile article as pottery, and did not depend for its effects on the most direct use of its materials, as all truly "applied" art should. It must always stand to the credit of French *faïenciers*, and particularly those of Rouen and Moustiers (however much they may have been influenced by the fact that they had no workmen trained to paint ambitious figure subjects), that they evolved those brilliant, or delicate, designs, founded on the work of contemporary French artists and designers, that distinguish the work of the French factories of the latter half of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth centuries. Mr. Solon has rightly stated that French Faïence had little or no influence on the development of English earthenware, which proceeded on totally different lines, but it is interesting to reflect what an influence the ornamental designs on the dishes of Rouen and Moustiers have had on the patterns produced by English potters in the latter half of the nineteenth century for the printed borders of their earthenware dinner services. One may think with regret of the fanciful "embroidery" borders of Rouen, or the daintily schemed and deftly painted Berain designs of Moustiers, reduced to the level of printed pattern; but the homage thus paid by our potters to their French forerunners shows how well these latter had understood their business, and how perfectly they had carried it out.

The flourishing days of the factories at Rouen and Moustiers mark the apogee of French Faïence. When the Strasburg potters borrowed from the German porcelain works the method of decoration with over-glaze colours and gold, we reach the first sign of that competition between faïence and porcelain which was to end in withdrawing from the earlier ware the patronage of the noble and the wealthy. So long as French Faïence could appeal to the support of the wealthy patron it was possible to produce work of a high order, even in general goods, and apart altogether from such magnificent *tours de force* as the busts of Fouquay or the paintings of Pierre Chapelle. When once porcelain became an article of regular production, its superior refinement and elegance of material and manufacture were bound to give it the first position, and the adoption of methods of decoration borrowed from the fashionable porcelain, however perfectly they might be carried out at Strasburg, at Sceaux, or at Marseilles, could only delay, and not prevent, the relegation of painted faïence to a more humble position. From even this position it was to be dislodged by another rival: While the French potters had been perfecting their faïence, the potters of Staffordshire had started from the level of the village pot-makers of Palissy's day, and worked out the methods and processes of English earthenware, which was to do for the common people what porcelain had done for the rich.

Within something like thirty years the abandonment of French Faïence was all but complete, and between the competition of French porcelain and of earthenware made in the English fashion, painted faïence disappeared, until the artistic revival in the latter half of the nineteenth century produced fresh and charming varieties of new wares based on the old technique.

At my solicitation Mr. Solon has added to his history of the old French Faïence a most interesting sketch of this revival. For the first time we have an account of the ferment of experiment and ideas which had so much to do with the great artistic development of modern French pottery. English collectors may thank Mr.

Solon for directing their attention to a worthy field for the display of their passion that has been but little cultivated among us, and if his account leads to a better appreciation of the work of the French artists and potters, among whom Th. Deck stands pre-eminent, it will be all to the good.

A word must also be given to the careful and exhaustive way in which the illustrations have been chosen. By drawing on the unrivalled stores of the museums of Paris as well as of London, it has been possible to give typical examples of every factory of note. Some of the objects chosen are illustrated for the first time, and will be altogether new to the great majority even of connoisseurs. The shop sign of an unknown faïence maker of Nevers, painted in blue and yellow in the true Italian style, and of very early date (Fig. 8), is of the first importance. So, too, are the head of St. John from Lyons (Fig. 4), the authenticity of which is beyond doubt, and the hunting bottle (Fig. 6) attributed to Sigalon of Nîmes, one of the earliest French *faïenciers*. Other illustrations of rare examples have been found by Mr. Solon, such as the Meillonas dish (Fig. 13); the Paris salad dish (Fig. 29); the Bordeaux wine cooler (Fig. 43); and the Clermont-Ferrand jug (Fig. 44). While in another class of ware the Apt ewer and basin (Fig. 41) are of the greatest interest.

In conclusion, I have to thank, in Mr. Solon's name as well as my own, the curators of the various pottery collections in the Victoria and Albert Museum and the British Museum, in London, and the Louvre and Cluny Museums in Paris, as well as in the Museum at Sèvres, for their assistance in the matter of illustrations.

In fairness to Mr. Solon himself it must be added that the glossary is by my hand.

WILLIAM BURTON.

October, 1903.

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FRENCH FAÏENCE.

INTRODUCTION.

IT is most important that in treating of faïence ware one should first of all settle the derivation and the correct application of the term. That there is much in a name, when ceramic technology is concerned, it is almost needless to point out.

From Faenza, a small town of Romagna, and, from the painted majolica issued from its prolific workshops, came, indubitably, the word "Faïence," applied in France to the superior class of pottery made in that country, at first, in imitation of the Italian importations. All the varieties included in the broad technical group constituted by the productions of the same nature, whether they be majolica from Italy, or Delft ware from Holland, or any kind of enamelled earthenware of foreign or national origin—are ranged in France under the collective denomination of "Faïence."

The distinctive characteristics common to all the subdivisions of the group, are that the clay of which the vessels are formed is of a soft and porous texture, of a light red or yellow colour, and that it is coated over with a thick, opaque, and usually white stanniferous enamel. One might expect from such a precise definition that the term should only be used in this restricted acceptance. And it was so for a long time. But when the manufacture of light earthenware glazed with lead had been brought to a very superior degree of excellence, it became

necessary to establish a distinction between a newly improved pottery, sufficiently refined and costly to be considered as an article of luxury, and the old style of cheap and vulgar crockery, also glazed with lead, intended for the commonest use. Consequently, the name of "Faïence fine" was given to the former, while the latter continued to be called "Pottery." This distinction was definitely established after the introduction on the French market of the fine English earthenware, and the imitations that were made of it, and it was, moreover, extended to some of the exceptional productions of the past. In this way, such masterpieces of the ceramic art as the Henri II. and the Palissy ware—too beautiful and precious in design and workmanship to be fitly described by the somewhat derogatory word "pottery"—were raised to the dignity of Faïence, although they are, in reality, earthenware glazed with lead.

The title of this book might seem to imply that it treats exclusively of the wares with stanniferous enamel; it is not, however, inconsistent with the subject if the initiatory chapters are found to deal with a kind of pottery which, speaking technically, does not belong to that class, but which it is customary, among French writers, to range under the same heading.

As it is not intended to attempt here a general survey of the conditions of the potter's handicraft during the Mediæval ages—our plan being limited to tracing the history of its march and progress in more recent times from the radical transformation that took place at the Renaissance period—an account of the rare and marvellous earthen vessels, first known under the name of Henri II. ware, must, in order of date, take precedence over all others.

One could not, perhaps, find a more striking example of the vivifying influence that the noble aspirations prevailing at the opening of the sixteenth century exercised upon the revival of decorative art, than the one afforded by a piece of Henri II. ware; nowhere else is it so plainly, one may say so gloriously, evidenced as in these priceless gems evolved out of

a lump of common clay. Whatever praise we may lavish upon their transcendent value will always fall short of the maker's deserts. In the exquisite taste of his artistic conceptions, in the spirited and skilful treatment of common materials, lay all the secret of his unparalleled achievements. The substances he employed were all of an ordinary kind. He had nothing better to work with than the regular white clay and the natural *Galena* glaze which the village pot-maker had made use of for centuries before. Of course, the simple and rough routine ways of the old craft were not equal to the delicacy required in the execution of his dainty designs; he borrowed from other arts some most suitable processes. From the casemaker and other leather workers, he took the idea of stamping the plain surface of his work with an intricate ornamentation obtained by the impression of sharp iron tools; and the damascener supplied him with the notion of inlaying substances of various colours into the cavities left by the stamping tool. By this unprecedented application of the combined resources of several trades, a pottery was created which was strikingly novel in its outward aspect.

The powerfully artistic individuality of the nameless maker of the Henri II. ware is still more distinctly emphasised by our knowledge of the fact that the means were not wanting in his time to produce fine pottery ware. Yet, before his advent, no one had been found who would, or could, attempt to do anything in that direction. Strange to say, after his death no one came forward who could, or would, accept his inheritance, and, following in his steps, continue to make the incomparable ware which has remained unique in its style in the aggregate of fictile productions.

But if the white ware inlaid with minute arabesques had too rapidly become a thing of the past, the impetus given to the progressive march of the leading handicrafts could not stop short at the potter's art. So, towards the middle of the sixteenth century, assuming different forms, decorative pottery of a very

high order was making its appearance in several parts of the kingdom.

Bernard Palissy, another glorious son of that parturient epoch, a multi-sided genius universally regarded as the father of French pottery, was still "groping his way in the dark," to use his own words, long after the Henri II. ware had ceased to be made. The pathetic ordeal he had to go through in his researches for a mysterious "white enamel"—so vividly narrated in his memoirs—has made of him a legendary hero. A better acquaintance with the times he lived in has now shown that he received, from the work of his contemporaries, much more effectual assistance than he would ever acknowledge. As a matter of fact, the inventor of the "Rustic figulines" never discovered the secret of that white enamel which had been for long years the unattainable object of his dreams; the embossed and coloured ware which, for want of a better, he settled down to make at the close of his experiments, was nothing else than a variation of that made long before his days, by his neighbours, the potters of Saintonge, presented in the refined form that his inborn taste and cultured talent had imparted to the crude but effective notions of his despised forerunners. Needless to say he left them far behind in the display of ingenious ornamentation and in perfection of workmanship. The captivating fantasy of arrangement, the neatness and accuracy of the natural objects—plants, shells, insects, and reptiles—with which he contrived to embellish his earthen vessels, belong to him alone, and were well calculated to excite admiration. But if he made a superior use of the old-established processes of French pottery, it cannot be said, on the other hand, that he introduced any material change in their practical basis.

The making of earthenware, adorned with reliefs and brightened with coloured glazes, offers no difficulty to a potter of average ability. Notwithstanding the mystery with which Palissy surrounded his operations his style soon had numerous imitators. It is one of the rare instances in which disciples have

shown themselves to be quite as clever as the master. Any stamp of individuality that one would expect to find in the handiwork of a particular artist is bound to be blotted out by a process uniform and invariable in its application. For that reason the productions of B. de Blémont, A. Clérey, and other masters of the "suite," are often mistaken for works of Palissy's own hand, from which they are practically indistinguishable.

While these final improvements had been brought into the manufacture of lead-glazed pottery, the first attempts at making white faïence with stanniferous enamel were being prosecuted in France. In several towns, faïence manufactories were started by, or with the assistance of, experienced artisans coming from Italy; for a time the trade remained in the hands of the majolists, who had imported the secrets from their own country. Although usually classified with French faïence, on account of its locality of origin, the ware they made is absolutely Italian in technics as well as in style of decoration. Whilst a new kind of pottery, still essentially French in character, had previously resulted from the transformation of an ancient national handicraft, the importation of the foreigner's processes gave nothing, at first, but poor imitations of a foreign ware in its decline.

In this category may be ranged many local undertakings which had been successful in their way during a short period, but were not conducive to the establishment in the place of a permanent industry.

No sequel, for instance, followed the establishment in Paris of the workshops and kilns in which Girolamo Della Robbia executed, in 1529, the enamelled terra-cottas intended for the decoration of the "Petit Château de Madrid," in the "Bois de Boulogne," and a variety of ornamental majolica.

Of remarkable excellence were the painted tile pavements, manufactured at Rouen, in 1542, by Masseot Abaquesne for the château of Ecouen, the cathedral of Langres, and other places. The painting, which betrays the Italian training of the hands employed by the master potter, did not secure public favour.

Abaquesne's venture left him a poor man, and eventually came to an end. About one hundred years afterwards the manufacture of faïence, revived in the city by French workers and carried on in a truly French taste, was to enter on a long and prosperous lease of life, which terminated only when stanniferous-glazed pottery was abandoned everywhere.

Short and precarious was the existence of the faïence works of Italian origin, conducted at Lyons, towards 1556, by Gambin and Tardessir, of Faenza; at Nîmes by Sigalon, in 1548; at Nantes by Jehan Ferro, and at a few other places, mention of which is recorded in contemporary writings.

It was not before 1602 that the art of the majolist took, at last, a firm footing on French soil. In that year the brothers Conrade, from Savona, established an important faïence manufactory in the city of Nevers, under the direct patronage of the Duke Louis de Gonzague. The rapid prosperity of the enterprise induced other potters to enter into competition with it, and to set up other factories conducted on the same lines. Their number soon increased sufficiently to make of the town a renowned manufacturing centre, the productions of which found a ready market all over France. The ware was pleasantly decorated in the manner then in vogue at Savona, or in imitation of Oriental porcelain, or, to speak more correctly, of the white and blue ware in the Chinese taste extensively imported from Holland. From the informal combination of these heterogeneous elements arose a special style of decoration, lacking in originality it is true, but one which gives to the Nevers faïence a character of its own.

The French manufacture was only to free itself entirely from Italian influence when the first permanent factory, founded at Rouen by Edme Poterat in 1644, was ultimately brought into full activity by his son, Louis Poterat, in 1673. Casting aside the obsolete traditions imported from Nevers during his father's time by common artisans, L. Poterat adopted for his ware a new scheme of ornamentation, which not

only tallied with the graceful inventions displayed in the other decorative handicrafts, but was moreover especially well calculated to bring out to the best advantage the capabilities of the technical means at his disposal. The numberless modifications of the scalloped and radiating patterns, called "Lambrequins," "Broderies," etc., were all happy adaptations of motives borrowed from inlaid wood, textile fabrics, lace, and particularly from the devices adorning the books of contemporary printers.

An elegant and complicated design, somewhat geometrical in its disposition, having been deftly delineated upon the piece, the outline was filled in with bright blue, light green, deep yellow, and scarlet colours, applied in flat tints or line work. This simple method preserved to each colour its full purity and brilliance. The result was, from an artistic point of view, extremely original and effective; speaking technically, it had also the rare quality of being essentially ceramic.

The painting on majolica, as practised at Faenza and Urbino, admirable as it had been in the country of its birth, was too much akin to fresco and oil painting to be absolutely a ceramic process. Much of the respective potency of the colours was lost through the necessity of graduating every tint and modelling every form; the general effect was often impaired by this mode of treatment. One may add that the ambitious figure subjects, so often indulged in by the majolist, required the talent of a Maestro Giorgio, or a Fra Xanto, to be unreservedly admired; treated by a common pottery painter they often verged on the ridiculous. It was certainly a wise decision to avoid running this risk and to demand of such ill-experienced hands as were then obtainable in the provinces nothing more than the execution of neatly outlined patterns which, delicate as they were in their complicated tracery, could nevertheless be carried out to perfection by any tolerably skilled painter. Decorated on these principles, and invested with an attractive and original character, the Rouen faïence proved at once more acceptable than anything that had

been attempted before. The widespread popularity it acquired was the just reward of such a timely transformation.

The Delft potters were deluging the country with their products; their painted tiles being particularly in demand. It would seem that the use that was made of their white and blue pottery for external and internal decoration, stimulated, rather than hindered, the development of the national industry. A striking example of its application to architectural purposes was shown in the "Trianon de Porcelaine," a small hunting lodge built for Louis XIV. at the far end of the Versailles Park, in 1670. The brick walls disappeared completely under a covering of blue painted faïence; all architectural adornment being made of the same material. The bulk of it was obtained from Holland, with the exception of a large number of big vases manufactured for the occasion by the Saint-Cloud *faïencerie*. Not a vestige has been preserved of all that; but in the account bills made out by Claude Révérend, a Paris dealer often wrongly described as a faïence manufacturer, are found the details of the goods he supplied for the decoration of this fanciful building.

A royal whim, a generous move on the part of King Louis XIV., has been made accountable for the patronage that the French nobility extended to the Rouen potters under special circumstances, and for a taste for Rouen faïence which, having originated in the highest circles, spread with rapidity among the middle classes. Protracted wars, famines, inundations, and stagnation of trade had brought the country to the brink of ruin, when, in 1702, the great monarch and the princes of the blood sent their gold and silver vessels to the mint to be coined into currency. Ready cash was wanted to meet the growing cost of the war, and to relieve public want and misery. Wealthy noblemen were asked to follow the example of the King, and assist in replenishing the empty State coffers by the sacrifice of their family plate. The request was instantly and enthusiastically responded to. In a few days such painted

faïence as it had been possible to purchase could be seen replacing, on the dining tables of Dukes, Counts, and Marquises, the vessels of precious metal gone to be transformed into coins. Eating out of faïence—as His Majesty affected to do on some memorable occasions—became a fashionable fad among the mighty. Costly dinner services, handsomely painted and emblazoned with the coat of arms of the noble patron, were promptly executed at Nevers, Rouen, and other places, to gratify the newly-born craze. For a craze it was; and it could not last longer than any other caprice of fashion. The brilliant colours, the elegant designs of the new ware, could not, after all, take away from it the sense of cheapness and vulgarity that is attached by many to all objects made of common clay. It is necessary to say that the transient success of the Rouen faïence did not give to it, as has been so often asserted, a permanent right of abode in the lordly palaces of the times. Soon silver and gold, with a sprinkling of Oriental china, graced once more the banqueting boards of the great. The few records of the auction sales of the period that have come down to us, show that the most elaborate of these armorial services, having been discarded by their first owners, changed hands for ridiculously small sums. But the movement initiated by the nobility was taken up by the whole nation. It was the people at large, the poor as well as the rich—for something was made for each of them—who patronised the gaily coloured ware, and caused its manufacture to become an important and prosperous industry.

The Rouen potters were not long left to walk alone and without contest on the path they had so successfully traced. Competition was on the watch, eager to step in and appropriate a portion of the reward. Within a few years, faïence works, in which the Rouen patterns were identically reproduced upon a satisfactory imitation of the original ware, were started at Saint-Cloud, Sinceny, Quimper, Lille, and other towns of the north; and these, in their turn, gave rise to a host of

small factories making the same articles on a more modest scale.

At the other end of the kingdom, old Provence had not lagged behind in supplying the inhabitants of the southern provinces with an equivalent of the white and gaily painted ware so much in fashion in the north. Moustiers, a small town of the Basses-Alpes, in which Pierre Clérissy established the manufacture in 1686, speedily became a centre of production second only in importance to Nevers and Rouen. The earliest pieces of the Clérissy period bear battle scenes and hunting subjects copied from *Floris* and *Tempesta*, and ornaments of a style which leave no doubt as to the Italian origin of the Moustiers factory. It was soon found that the debased notions of the Genoese majolica would no longer answer the taste of the day, and that a new style of decoration would have to be introduced. In the engravings of the French masters of decorative art, Berain, Marot, Bernard Toro, and in the grotesque figures of Jacques Callot, the Moustiers painters found an inexhaustible fund of elegant designs and facetious subjects admirably suited to the embellishment of their ornamental ware. They never approached, however, in their gamut of colours, the lively brightness of the Rouen polychrome patterns. The beauty of their faïence depended, above all, on the whiteness and brilliancy of a stanniferous glaze unequalled in the productions of the other French centres; it does, indeed, look at its best when completed simply with delicate traceries deftly pencilled in light blue. This unpretentious form of ornamentation was exclusively adopted in all the southern localities where the success of the Moustiers works had caused the establishment of an opposition trade. The factories of Ardis, Montauban, Clermont-Ferrand, La Forest, etc., did nothing more than tread in the steps of their successful forerunners.

We must now turn our glance towards the east of France, to see the first application of a technical innovation which was

to upset, at least partially, the established notions of *faïence* painting. Towards 1721, Charles Hannong, of Strasburg, assisted by a certain Wackenfeld, one of the skilled workmen who had managed to run away from Meissen after having mastered part of the secret processes of that factory, conceived the idea of decorating his *faïence* with porcelain colours.

In the usual course of manufacture of the tin-glazed ware, glaze and colours are baked together at one operation. In such a case the painting is limited to the use of the few metallic oxides which can stand the high temperature required for the perfect firing of the goods. By employing the soft and transparent enamel colours, which can be fixed to the surface of the previously glazed pieces by the much lower degree of heat produced in a muffle kiln, the palette at the disposal of the painter offers infinite resources and an intensity and purity of tint quite unobtainable by the former process.

Decorated in this manner, French *faïence* lost much of the robust and vigorous character it had inherited from Italian majolica, but it gained a greater diversity of aspect, a kind of feminine refinement in its completion, which gave to a comparatively cheap pottery the outward appearance of costly porcelain. Justly as one may disapprove, as a rule, of the transference of the normal technics of one branch of the art into another, in this case it was but the legitimate substitution of a kindred process for one which did not offer the same advantages. Consequently, it may be said that, notwithstanding its pretension to rival porcelain, the Strasburg ware remained, through its fundamental constitution, stanniferous *faïence* of the true sort.

It was a welcome novelty, and, as such, this composite style soon became the rage of the moment. Not only was it exclusively adopted in large factories established for the purpose of manufacturing this description of ware, such as Niderviller, Lunéville, Bellevue, Longwy, Sceaux, and others, but it was also rapidly introduced in the older factories which, like Rouen, Sinceny, Marseilles, etc., found in the practice of over-glaze

painting the means of reviving a taste rapidly going out of fashion.

This proved the death-blow of the old methods; and it could scarcely have been otherwise. The subjects, instead of being painted upon the raw enamel, still in the pulverulent state in which it had been deposited on the ware, with heavy touches and half-blurred lines, were neatly traced upon the fully glazed piece; the outline, as sharp as the stroke of a pen, being subsequently filled in with transparent enamels. Instead of the small number of colours to which under-glaze painting was limited, gorgeous pinks, crimsons, and purples could vie on the same object with the gleam of blues, greens, and yellows of the brightest hues.

Between these two styles, public taste, always eager for a change, could not hesitate to choose. So the pseudo-majolica of the French potter had to make room for the coming of a porcelain-like faïence.

The antiquated traditions long persisted, however, in many places, particularly at Nevers. But the products of that kind were no longer patronised by the upper classes; painted faïence had become the ware of the poor. At the end of the eighteenth century all the crockery sold on the market-place, and at the village shop, was illustrated with subjects intended to amuse the common people, or to appeal to the social aspirations of the moment. From day to day passing events were recorded on common pottery. The history of the French Revolution can be followed, from phase to phase, in the naïve figures and telling emblems crudely painted on those pitchers, plates and salad bowls, to which Champfleury, who was the first to collect and classify them, has given the name of "*Faïences patriotiques*." Judging from what remains of it, the production of this popular ware must have been considerable. The manufacture of stanniferous faïence, for useful purposes, is now quite abandoned in France.

Dainty porcelain stood as the recognised paragon of ceramic

excellence; to obtain the nearest approach to it was the desire of those who could not afford the cost of the genuine article; hence the constant efforts made by the potters to produce a tolerable substitute. With the best white and blue faïence clever makeshifts had been made that did creditably play the part of Oriental china; German porcelain could not show brighter enamels than those applied over the glaze of the later faïence; but the likeness did not go any further. In all cases the material was coarse, heavy, and brittle; the glaze was soon dulled by use, liable to craze and to chip off. These shortcomings were particularly objectionable in all pieces intended for the service of the table, and were only accepted as an irremediable evil.

One day a ware of a very different character was thrown by England upon the French market. It was made of white clay and bore a transparent glaze.

In substance the vessels were thin and light, yet perfectly true to shape, and hard enough to withstand free handling and long use; the glaze did not craze or lose its glossy surface; lastly, it could be obtained at a very moderate cost. In short, it was found that English earthenware, while being sold at a price not exceeding that of ordinary faïence, offered many of the desirable qualities that had so far been the exclusive privilege of expensive china. Coming to the front with such recommendations the intruder was bound to conquer, and, within a short lapse of time, to upset the whole conditions of a fast-rooted industry.

It is needless to say that light yellow or white pottery of a similar kind had always been produced by the French potter. But since the days when Palissy and his imitators had momentarily instilled into a very simple process the merits of artistic treatment, only the cheapest and commonest vessels had been made in lead-glazed pottery. The improvement that could be brought into its manufacture, and the elegance and refinement of which it was susceptible, were made manifest

by the introduction of the Staffordshire ware in all its varieties. A comparison with the somewhat clumsy faïence showed how much better adapted it was to the requirements of the times.

In the Rouen ceramic museum may be seen a curious cream-coloured jug, which might be mistaken for a piece of English make were it not that it bears the inscription: "A ROUEN, 1735." It shows how early the foreign ware had been appreciated and imitated in France.

From the fact that after the year 1740 very heavy customs duties were charged upon all pottery coming from England—duties that were so highly increased in 1749 as to render them almost prohibitive—we may infer that the import trade had attained sufficient proportions to be deemed a source of danger to the national industry.

Meanwhile a spirited competition had been started; attempts were made to fight the enemy with his own weapons. As early as 1745, Edme was conducting in the centre of Paris the "Manufacture Royale d'Angleterre," an undertaking highly patronised by the aristocracy. He advertised his making of a "Faïence fine," or "Terre de pipe"—as white earthenware was then called—as beautiful as any that came from abroad. In the same year Saladin established, at Saint-Omer, the manufacture of a similar kind of ware, with a view of opposing the influx of English goods which was overrunning the northern provinces.

It must be observed that these isolated measures were only the first lines of defence raised against a still skirmishing enemy. The moment had yet to come when a crushing onslaught would be directed against the very front of the forces by the well-organised invasion of the great Josiah Wedgwood's incomparable productions. They appeared, and in spite of the exorbitant duties to which they were subjected they commanded at once an immense success. When, through the treaty of commerce, which came in force in 1786, English pottery was admitted at a purely nominal rate, the manufacturers rose in a

body to protest energetically against the continuance of a state of things that was causing the ruin of the French trade.

The transformation that was being gradually effected in pottery manufacture became general at that moment. Without trying to enumerate all the factories in which earthenware was made after the English fashion during the second half of the eighteenth century, one may mention the following.

Septfontaines, founded by the brothers Boch in 1767; Longwy was connected with it shortly afterwards; subsequent additions have made of the original concern about the mightiest ceramic enterprise of modern times.

Sarreguemines, by Utzschneider, in 1770; also one of the most important establishments of our days.

Montereau, in 1775, under the practical management of Ralph Shaw, of Burslem, and W. Clark, of Newcastle.

Apt, in Provence, where good cream-colour and fine agate ware was made by the Moulins.

The names of Orléans, Douai, Niderviller, Lunéville, Saint-Amand-les-Eaux, and Bordeaux, are also worth being recorded; the "Prince of Wales Works," established at Rue de Crussol in Paris, by Potter, in 1789, deserves particular mention.

No appreciable influence was ever exerted by French *faïence* upon English pottery. Such stanniferous ware as was made at Lambeth, and later at Bristol and Liverpool, shows, in the first instance, the remnants of the Italian tradition; in the second, a direct derivation from Delft models. The present condition of the French ceramic industry makes it evident, on the contrary, that it owes much to its early efforts at imitating English earthenware, which, from a technical point of view, it has never equalled.

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Much information may also be obtained from the general histories of the ceramic art.

I.
HENRI II. WARE;
OR
FAÏENCE OF SAINT-PORCHAIRE.

HENRI II. WARE.

REGRETTABLE as it may be to have to make a retrogressive step in the path of ever-advancing knowledge, it is safer sometimes to return to a good old name than to adopt a new one which a supplementary consideration of the subject may soon oblige us to discard. The name of Henri II. ware had been fixed upon to designate an exceptional group of ivory-white earthen vessels, daintily inlaid with rosettes, strapwork, diapers of red and black clay, and bearing, in some instances, the royal arms and monogram, the whole piece being covered with the lead glaze of common pottery. Shapes and ornamental devices proclaimed that the vessels belonged to the Renaissance period ; but they offered no clue to the discovery of the place where they might have been made. The conjectures that were offered in attributing them to some well-known artist, as well as the researches that were instituted with a view of fixing the locality of fabrication, have all proved anything but conclusive. Why should we not revive a name once accepted as a fair designation of the age and style of the ware, and which does not convey too definite an attribute ?

Ascanio, the favourite pupil of Benvenuto ; Girolamo Della Robbia, who worked for several years at Paris ; the printer Geoffroy Tory, whose typographic ornaments present some likeness to those impressed on the enigmatic faïence, have been, in turn, credited with the making of it. No serious attention, however, could be given to such speculative assertions. Neither could the opinion expressed at the time, that the nature of the clay denoted an English origin, be confidently entertained.

One day, Mr. Benjamin Fillon, a learned, sagacious, and trustworthy historian, suddenly presented a solution of the problem, so ingeniously developed and supported by such documentary evidence, that no one dared to challenge its striking plausibility. While scanning the ancient records of the Poitou province he happened to meet with a statement which left no doubt as to the fact that, towards 1529, some faïence of an undetermined sort was being made at the castle of Oiron, near Thouars. The lady of the castle, Countess Helen of Hangest, was possessed of superior artistic abilities; a contemporary memorandum, discovered in the family archives, disclosed that, working at her instigation and under her personal supervision, the librarian Bernard and his assistant Charpentier, were then fashioning and firing ornamental pottery, the description and purpose of which was, unfortunately, not specified. Fillon, recollecting that the coats of arms emblazoned upon the so-called Henri II. ware were mostly those of the Gouffier, the La Trémouille, the Laval-Montmorency, and other noble families of the region, and also that the greater part of the specimens so far recovered had been found in the neighbourhood of the castle, naturally came to the conclusion that he had at last ascertained the birthplace of the perplexing vessels. Let us add that the style of the impressed ornamentation, stamped in the clay by means of iron tools similar to those used by the bookbinders, was strangely suggestive of the regular avocation of Bernard the librarian, turned potter for the occasion.

No weak point could be detected in the concatenation of proofs adduced by the archæologist in support of his Oiron theory. The name of Oiron ware was at once adopted by connoisseurs and artists, without one word of dissent. Alas for the fame of the misled historian—a victim of his own erudition and misused ingenuity—the proud fabric he had so laboriously built up, stone upon stone, was doomed to fall bodily to the ground. The memorandum discovered at the Oiron castle was authentic and explicit enough; the argument

resting on its testimony was quite logical and unsophisticated, but, unfortunately, the document had no bearing on the pottery in question; it is now accepted that it referred to majolica pavements, painted in the Italian style, which were being made for the adornment of the castle, and parts of which are still *in situ*. Benjamin Fillon died without having ever had any suspicion of the truth.

Another sagacious scrutiniser of old parchments, Mr. E. Bonnaffé, was to destroy, at one blow, all confidence in the veracity of a captivating romance. In the inventory of the goods and chattels contained in Thouars Castle, drawn up in 1542, after the death of François de La Trémouille, he found the entry of two singular items, the further consideration of which put him on the track of the probable origin of the Henri II. ware. Among the many objects of great value enclosed in the treasure-chamber were mentioned "Two tazzas made of Saint-Porchaire clay," and "a square box containing two salt-cellars of Saint-Porchaire clay." In the "inventory" of the goods left by the "Seigneur de la Bouchetière," gentleman-in-ordinary of the king's chamber, drawn up in 1596, also appears the mention of "four dishes and a salt-cellar in Saint-Porchaire clay."

It happens that among the specimens of the so-called Oiron ware so far enumerated, tazzas and salt-cellars outnumber all other pieces. The particular care taken for their preservation denotes that those mentioned in the inventory were not pottery of the ordinary kind, and one can understand that these elegant vessels, finely decorated with inlaid clays, would have warranted the high value apparently set upon them. Saint-Porchaire is a village situated in Poitou, near Bressuire, not far from Oiron, in the very heart of the district in which the majority of the examples of the ware have been discovered. François de La Trémouille, whose coat of arms occurs on several of them, was Baron of Bressuire, and may have been the patron and protector of the clever potter at work on his estates. It is also noticed

that most of the armorial bearings delineated on the finest pieces belong to other branches of the same family.

All the above observations, coupled with many others of minor importance gathered with great circumspection, induced Mr. Bonnaffé to ask us to replace the name of Oiron ware by that of "Faïence of Saint-Porchaire." The only flaw in the train of his otherwise most sequent deductions is that the pottery made of Saint-Porchaire clay cannot be said incontestably to have been made at Saint-Porchaire. Indeed, a French writer of great authority on these questions announced, not long ago, the revelation of some startling documents establishing that it was actually produced in the vicinity of Paris.

Little is to be said about the technical processes employed by the potter, whoever he may have been; they are of the greatest simplicity. The piece, after it had been thrown and turned, was coated over with a film of fine white clay; the scheme of decoration was then impressed upon the still moist surface by the application of small stamping irons, and completed by filling in the impressed designs with diluted clays of red, yellow, and black colours. Moulded accessories and touches of variegated glazes were added at a later period. The whole was glazed over with a compound of lead and ground glass.

The rare and matchless objects executed in that simple method are, nevertheless, perfect gems of the fictile art. A born artist alone could have conceived the idea of producing a style of pottery so much in advance of anything that was made at the time, without departing from the ruling technics of a common handicraft. His attention was not turned towards the introduction of any more material improvements than were necessary to carry out his ideals in a fitting form. He felt confident that genius and talent could evolve marvels of taste and workmanship out of a few handfuls of ordinary potter's clay.

Upon every work that came out of his hand, the seal of a strong individuality of *prime-sault* is strikingly impressed.

Each of them is an original creation, full of surprising novelty never repeated by the maker. We realise that this anonymous master worked with no other object than to gratify his innate love of the beautiful, and to deserve the praises and favour of the exalted personages to whom he was wont to dedicate his productions.

It is scarcely possible to admit that such incomparable works were the regular output of a village workshop, in which cheap and vulgar pots were made by common potters. It is said that such a place had existed at Saint-Porchaire from a much earlier period. One is not prepared to deny that the artist may have derived from these modest operatives the materials he required, and perhaps the elementary knowledge of a trade still unfamiliar to him. An ornamental dish "of Saint-Porchaire make" is mentioned in "*LES EGLOGUES ET AUTRES ŒUVRES POÉTIQUES DE JACQUES BÈREAU POICTEVIN.*" Poitiers, 1565. Such description of the dish as is given by the poet calls to mind the kind of roughly embossed and coloured pottery of the times, but it could not be applied to anything so elegantly designed and delicately finished as the Henri II. ware.

Certain pieces loaded with a great exuberance of applied parts, and of somewhat imperfect execution, would seem to denote the intervention of some pupil or assistant who might have been occasionally entrusted with the execution of the work, but in all cases under the direction of the master. A pupil working independently would, in all probability, have produced several replicas of the same model; as it stands, the number of pieces on which we recognise traces of another hand is much smaller than that of the more chaste and sober examples of the style that we may call the first manner.

Sixty-five pieces of Henri II. ware have found their place in museums and private collections. Although scattered in various countries, they are all well known by connoisseurs through the special works and catalogues of sales in which

they have been reproduced. From the distinctive character of the ornamentation they have been divided into three classes, said to represent three successive periods of manufacture.

The first class is composed of small pieces, of elegant but simple shape, completed merely with an inlaid work of black and red clay. A few covered tazzas decorated inside and out with bands of rosettes and arabesques may be given as good representatives of the earliest style.

The second comprises objects of various forms, such as jugs, salt-cellars, etc., in which accessories moulded in full relief, human figures, animals, architectural ornaments, are made use of in addition to the inlaid work. Fifteen salt-cellars, all different in design, probably made at the same period, testify to the rule that the maker had imposed upon himself never to repeat the creations of his fancy.

The third is formed of specimens of higher pretensions, characterised by complicated profiles, a superabundance of applied parts, and the introduction of variegated glazes coloured with metallic oxides. One may take as typical examples of this last evolution of the style the extraordinary candlesticks, a medley of architectural and plastic details, the combination of which makes up in richness and originality for what it loses in sobriety and purity of taste.

Noticed for the first time by A. Pottier in "*Willemain's, Monuments inedits de l'Art Français*," Paris, 1839, the Henri II. faïence appeared in the curiosities sales but a few years afterwards. The two first specimens that came under the hammer fetched 500 and 1,100 francs respectively; prices considered as extravagant at that moment.

Within the next few years, however, the ware having assumed its due rank in the hierarchy of covetable rarities, the market value of it went on increasing in appalling proportions. It has now reached such a position that it is impossible to foretell to what limit the enthusiastic amateurs who will contend for its possession may be prepared to

press their offers next time one fine example appears in the auction room. At the sale of the Fountain collection, one of the candlesticks to which reference has just been made was secured by Mr. Dutuit for a sum approaching £4,000.

A last remark, that could apply to few other classes of ceramic work, is that there are no doubtful pieces of Henri II. ware. No specimen has ever been added to our slowly gathered assemblage of typical examples of which the genuineness could be suspected. The materials of which they are formed are, as we have seen, of common description, and no exceptional skill was displayed in the workmanship; yet these vessels were, and have remained, unique of their kind. Even the slight imperfection noticeable in certain portions of the work is an additional guarantee of authenticity; to imitate them would baffle the ability of the forger clever enough to produce a deceitful majolica vase, or a spurious Palissy dish. Like the touch of the master on an oil painting, or the peculiarities of the handwriting in a MS. document, these inherent features cannot be definitely described, yet an experienced connoisseur finds in them a safe guide to identification. Imitations have, of course, often been tried by modern potters, but they fail in this, that they are either too coarse or too neatly finished, and the best of them could never be made to pass for an original.

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II.

BERNARD PALISSY AND HIS SCHOOL.

PALISSY WARE.

HIGHER than any other stands the name of Bernard Palissy in the golden roll of the potters of the past. Enthusiastic writers have glorified his life in prose and in verse. A deep sense of accomplishing a too-long deferred duty, and of rendering at last full justice to the memory of an unaccountably forgotten genius, pervades each of the innumerable volumes and pamphlets devoted to the narration of the trials, the sufferings, and the ultimate triumph of the hero. The picture, as a rule, glitters with the most vivid colours; very few are the cases in which some dark touches, more consistent with strict reality, have been added by a clear-sighted and unbiassed historian.

Of all the phases of a chequered and romantic existence—which Palissy himself has eloquently related in his memoirs—none is so well calculated to excite our interest and sympathy as the distressing period in which he was struggling strenuously against insuperable difficulties, mixing clays and chemical materials at haphazard, in the hope of inventing an ideal kind of pottery, the secret of which he was never to discover.

His writings, which embody the sum of the most advanced notions of his times, and propound many a bold hypothesis of his own towards the settlement of some weighty problems in the study of natural philosophy, have allowed the historian to represent Palissy in turn as a scientist and a philosopher; a pioneer in the field of geological and chemical research; a

daring theorist on agricultural improvements; lastly, as an apostle of religious reformation. But it is chiefly in his character as a potter that his name has been handed down to us; and it is only in that capacity that his many-sided personality will be considered in this perfunctory sketch.

Bernard Palissy was born towards 1510; some say near Saintes, others near Agen; both date and locality of birth are equally uncertain. His parents must have been in tolerably good circumstances, for they gave him a sound elementary education. When the moment came to choose a trade for him he was apprenticed to a stained-glass painter, and also trained to the practice of land surveying. At the end of his apprenticeship he started on his wandering journey through the French provinces, as was customary with all the skilled operatives who wanted to gain in this way further teaching and greater experience in all the branches of their handicraft.

Passionately fond of the acquisition of knowledge, and gifted with uncommon powers of observation, Palissy turned to good profit the years he spent in travelling. When he returned and settled in the town of Saintes, his mind was loaded with facts and information gathered by the way, and he was anxious to make known the bold theories he had formulated on many important questions.

Meantime, he was earning a scanty living by painting "images," and practising occasionally as a land surveyor. A trivial occurrence was to decide his future career and make a potter of Maître Bernard. He tells us that, towards 1542, a curious vase, formed of an unknown substance, was fortuitously shown to him; so deeply was he impressed by the beauty of the material that he resolved at once to try what he could do to discover the secret of its composition, and to take no rest until he had succeeded in producing vases equally beautiful. Of the piece that bound him, so to speak, under its spell, he has given no description, beyond saying that the paste was a kind of "white enamel." From this it has been conveniently suggested

PLATE II.

PALISSY WARE.

Dish: "Venus and Cupids."

L. $19\frac{1}{2}$ in. W. 16 in.

(See p. 33.)



that it was probably a specimen of Italian majolica; an assumption that cannot be entertained for one moment. Examples of stanniferous faïence were not uncommon in France at that period, and he must certainly have seen many of them in the course of his travels. To enamel a piece of pottery in the same manner would not have been a difficult task, for he had mastered the secret of opaque enamel during his stay at Limoges. In all probability the curious object that had left such an impression on his mind was one of the still very rare examples of Oriental porcelain in the possession of some nobleman, of whom he did not think it necessary to give us the name. In attributing the inexplicable whiteness and translucency of the substance to an artificial mixture of the nature of an enamel, he fell into a mistake which prevented his blindfold experiments ever resulting in an approach towards success. The pathetic account of his distressing and endless failures has however, done more to perpetuate the fame of Palissy than if he had actually accomplished his dream, and solved the mystery of Oriental porcelain.

After fifteen years of fruitless trial he gave up all hope of ever obtaining the "white enamel"; but having acquired great experience in all things connected with the manufacture of pottery, he decided to devote himself entirely to the making of earthenware vessels of a much improved kind, which offered none of the difficulties he had had to contend with. So remarkable were these vessels in the originality of the design, the brilliance of the colours, and the perfection of the workmanship, that Palissy could fairly claim to be the inventor of a new ware.

The potters of Brizambourg and La Chapelle-des-Pots, villages situated in the vicinity of Saintes, had long been making a rude but picturesque sort of ware, adorned with embossed subjects and enlivened with various colours. With these rural pot-makers Palissy kept up a constant intercourse, borrowing some of their materials, firing his trials in their ovens,

besides securing the permanent assistance of some of the most experienced among them. One is struck by the likeness exhibited by the robust work of the village potters, and the refined pottery of the "inventor of the rustic figulines." In both cases, clay, glaze, and colours are obviously of the same nature; the original technics assuming a gradual improvement as Palissy pursued their practice. It was when experimenting with other kinds of earths that he experienced his most bitter disappointment; in short, he had to revert for practical purposes to the regular plastic clay. No modification was introduced by him into the composition of the glaze; to the end he used nothing else but the "Galena," or lead ore, employed for common pottery: a thick glaze of a light yellowish tint, but brighter and richer than that given by any artificial compound. The introduction of a more brilliant and varied gamut of colours must be placed to his credit; but one must recollect that his experience as a stained-glass painter had made him familiar with the capabilities of metallic oxides. Surprise has often been expressed that in his chapter on "*L'art de Terre*," Palissy purposely refrained from giving any technical description of his own ways of proceeding, by which the potter's art would have benefitted. He excuses himself for being silent on this point by saying that the secrets that have been the fruits of long and arduous experiments must remain the property of the discoverer, and also that researches and failures are, for a potter, the most efficient teachers. Now, a plain-spoken master of the trade might, perhaps, venture to say that such reticence should not be attributed so much to the determination of retaining possession of many secret methods and recipes, as to the sly consciousness of having little to divulge that was not already well known to potters. To disclose the simplicity of the processes he employed would surely have been unwise, for the interest raised by his attractive pottery was greatly increased by the mystery with which Palissy surrounded his practical labours.

In artistic treatment Palissy's ware surpassed anything that



PALISSY.

FIG. 1.—THE TEMPERANCE DISH, FROM THE
PEWTER PLATEAU BY FRANÇOIS
BRIOT.

D. 20 in. (*See p. 33.*)

was done at the time. The "Peasant of Saintonges," as he liked to be called, had raised his station much above that of an ordinary potter. Far from being the isolated and unassisted toiler he affected to be, the excellence of the objects he selected for reproduction in clay leads us to suspect that he was in touch with some of the best artists of the period, and that his education in art matters enabled him to appreciate the value of their works. There has never been any idea that he carved a single model with his own hands; but he employed sculptors of great talent, and no better models could have been obtained than those that were produced under his direction after the engravings of Jean Cousin and Etienne de L'Aulne, or the decorative figures of the masters of the Fontainebleau school. On some occasions his moulds were taken directly from original works in chased metal; in this way the admirable pewter ewers and plateaux of François Briot were reproduced by him in enamelled pottery.

It was only at a later period that he resorted to the practice of adorning his vessels with reptiles, plants and shells, disposed in fanciful arrangements; the date of the productions of this kind is fixed by the fact that the shells he made use of all belong to the fossils of the Paris basin; they could only have been made after he had left Saintes for the metropolis. Each of the details entering into the scheme of decoration was moulded directly from a natural object; the modeller had no share in the work. The decorative effect of the piece depended entirely on the happy combinations of these realistic fragments; the neatness with which they were executed, and the harmonious brilliance of the colours, did the rest.

Of the most important of Palissy's ceramic works, such as the picturesque grottoes of enamelled faïence he built up at Ecoen for the Connétable de Montmorency, in 1563, and in the Tuileries gardens for the Queen-Mother, in 1570, nothing remains to us but a few fragments now preserved in the Paris museums, manifestly unworthy of his fame. A MS. description

exists of the later grotto, from which we may gather that it was a really wonderful and matchless performance, so far at least as artistic pretensions and magnitude of proportions are concerned; but the scheme of the master was probably carried out by the hands of common workmen.

A sketch of the vicissitudes of an eventful life that many biographers have narrated in full cannot be attempted here. Nevertheless, Palissy's arrival in Paris in 1562, his appointment at the same date as "Inventor of the rustic figulines and Potter to H.M. the King," and the prosperity which followed this appointment, cannot be left unrecorded. An adequate reward for so many years of obstinate struggle and exceptional achievement had at last come, and it had assumed the highest form that any potter could have desired. The honour bestowed upon him was not a vain title. Palissy, having been granted leave to erect his oven and workshop in the royal garden of the Tuileries, frequently received the visits of the King and his mother, who took great interest in watching the progress of his work.

The report of the wonderful discoveries of the pot-maker of Saintes had long before been circulated by the influential noblemen who had patronised his early researches, and to whom he owed this crowning favour. His fame had preceded him when he came to settle in Paris. He was reputed to be a man of universal knowledge and a propounder of new doctrines in all the branches of natural science. In that capacity he delivered courses of lectures, for which he charged one crown—a large sum for the times—and which were attended by the most distinguished men in science, literature, and art.

The treatises and memoirs he published in 1563 and 1580 contributed to spread far and wide the reputation he had acquired in the select circle of his friends. In literary merit, either for pathos, choice of expression or clearness of description, many pages of these volumes equal the works of the best prose writers of the period.

PLATE III.

PALISSY WARE.

Ewer with Figures.

H. $10\frac{3}{4}$ in. W. $8\frac{3}{4}$ in.



When the end came, his affairs had taken a turn for the worse; success and happiness had forsaken the old master; it was a sad and terrible end. Up to the last years of his life his patrons had been powerful enough to preserve him from the persecutions directed against his co-religionists. But in 1590—when he was eighty years of age—his diatribes against all existing powers, his denunciation of prevailing errors and crimes, had become so aggressive as to be considered a danger to the State. He was incarcerated in the Bastille, where he is said to have died after two years of captivity.

Palissy left a good number of successors and imitators. His so-called secrets were in everybody's hands. His sons, Nicholas and Mathurin, who had assisted him during his life, continued to practise the art of their father. At Avon, near Fontainebleau, in the latter part of the sixteenth century, several potters were making vessels and figures of a kind absolutely similar to those made by Palissy, and by no means inferior in quality. The name of Claude Barthélemy, also called Barthélemy de Blémont, appears in the civic registers at the date 1580. To him may be attributed the charming statuette of a nurse, often mentioned as one of Palissy's best works, one copy of which bears the initials B. B. Another name, that of Claude Beaulat, figures in the register for the year 1613, accompanied with the qualification of "Artist in enamelled clay to H.M. the King." This title was granted to several potters in succession for many years afterwards.

At Paris, in the Tuileries gardens, another potter to his Majesty had taken the place once occupied by Palissy. It was Cléricy, of Marseilles, who styled himself "Operative in Sigillated Clay." Under the name of "Terra Sigillata" a fine white earth was then extensively sold in stamped tablets as a panacea against many evils. Palissy had long experimented upon it, believing that in it he would find the basis of the mysterious white ware. It was of an infusible nature, and it required, to be of service, the addition of a fluxing medium that he could never discover. Certain late pieces, probably the work of Cléricy, are

made of a clay of that kind; the particles of the material are so imperfectly fused together that when scraped at a fracture they crumble away like sand.

None of the above potters ever adopted a mark of his own; consequently their ware is frequently mistaken for that of the old master. In some cases, however, we can safely identify a specimen emanating from the "Suite"; as, for instance, when it reproduces an engraving known to be posterior to Palissy's death; or when the subject includes figures in the costumes of the seventeenth century. The fine dish on which Henri IV. is represented running on all fours, with his children on his back, and the statuette of a nurse dressed in a cap and bodice which came into fashion during the reign of Louis XIII., illustrate the case in point.

All biographers lay special stress on the extraordinary brilliance of the coloured glazes employed by Palissy, a quality which, they say, the imitations could never approach. This is but one more instance of an ill-founded statement, which, having been once formulated by some accredited author, is repeated for ever after with full confidence. On the contrary, a comparative examination of the genuine faïence of Palissy with the work of his followers makes one aware of the fact that the former is invariably of a soft and subdued tone, and that it is only in the latter that the intensely bright purples, greens, and yellows are to be seen.

The modern imitations on the market are plentiful; some of them are sufficiently deceptive to warrant a collector in being constantly on his guard. Excellent, however, as spurious specimens may be in their general appearance, very few of them equal the sharpness of detail and the harmonious combinations of colour of the original. Moreover, the forger has always been at fault with the marbling at the back of the dishes. The work is dry and patchy; the tinted glazes imperfectly blended, and by this alone a sham Palissy can, generally, be easily recognised.



PALISSY.

FIG. 2.—DISH WITH REPTILES AND SHELLS.
D. 21 in.

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PLATE IV.

PALISSY WARE.

Dish: "Rustiques Figulines."

L. 21 in. W. 16 in.





PALISSY.

FIG. 3.--PLAQUE WITH FIGURE SYMBOLISING
"WATER."
H. 22 in.

III.

LYONS.

NIMES, AND THE ITALIAN INFLUENCE.

LYONS.

Of the twenty-seven master potters known to have been at work at Lyons in the early part of the sixteenth century, seven were of Italian origin; they are said to have practised their art after the fashion used in their own country. If this statement is to be accepted, Lyons may claim priority over all other French towns in the manufacture of faïence with stanniferous enamel.

The important commercial intercourse carried on between France and Italy was centred in the midland city; there the Medicis and the Sforzas had established a bank. Skilled workmen of all trades, potters included, were constantly coming over from Tuscany and Genoa to seek their fortune in the foreign land. Documents still in existence record that, in 1554, the Genoese Griffio, and later on, in 1574, two masters of Faenza, Julien Gambin and Domenico Tardessir, had petitioned to the King to be granted the sole right of making painted majolica after the manner they claimed to have introduced into the country. This might be made to agree with the previous record, but only if we assume that nothing else but white faïence had been made by their predecessors.

No authentic example of the work of the earlier majolists has ever been recognised, unless one may attribute to them the beautiful painted tile pavement of the church of Brou, which was completed in 1536, before Griffio settled in Lyons. We are more fortunate as regards the ornamental terra-cotta produced by the native potters. In the British Museum may

be seen an embossed tile, bearing the head of Saint John the Baptist encircled in a gothic inscription, the very mould of which was excavated, together with other subjects of the same order, from the site of the ancient chapel of "L'Observance"; the moulds and wasters seem to indicate that all had been made in the place. The modelling of the head is of a very high character and absolutely French in style.

The probability that painted majolica continued to be manufactured at Lyons, if not extensively, at least for a long course of years after its introduction, is shown by fourteen dishes in the Louvre Museum, some of which bear the date 1646. None of them is marked; but the paintings reproduce engravings issued by the local Lyons printers, and are accompanied by inscriptions in the French language; this has been deemed sufficient to warrant the attribution.

During the seventeenth century, eighteen names of master potters are found entered in the civic register. The number of "FAÏENCIERS" increased to sixty-eight in the following century; but it is presumable that the list includes the names of the faïence dealers having shops in the town.

Gradually the manufacture dwindled into the making of coarse and plain vessels of common use. In 1733 Joseph Combe, a potter from Moustiers, established a factory in which faïence of more artistic pretensions was decorated in the style adopted in his native town. He obtained for his works the title of "Royal manufactory," and received a financial subsidy from the municipal council up to 1758. His ware was occasionally marked with a capital C. One of his followers, named Patras, who worked at the beginning of the nineteenth century, has signed some of his painted pieces with the initials, I. P. S.

An attempt has been made to establish the existence, at an early date, of some important faïence factories in the neighbouring town of Roanne. But the infatuated writer responsible for the statement has only been able to prove that a popular



LYONS.

FIG. 4.—HEAD OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST.
TERRA-COTTA OF THE XVI. CENTURY.

ware, of the "patriotic" kind, was produced there at the end of the eighteenth century.

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NIMES.

Antoine Sigalon, born in the neighbourhood of Nimes, was apprenticed to a pôt-maker of the town; his French origin is vouched for by unequivocal documents. His work, however, is essentially Italian in character. From the same sources we learn that he set up shop for himself in 1548, and was authorised to raise all the clay he wanted to carry on his trade as a potter. His regular output consisted of common pottery and tiles, but he also acquired some notoriety for his painted faïence, "after the fashion of Pisa." Ornamental tazzas and vases, and sets of drug-pots for the adornment of the apothecaries' *officinas* in the southern provinces, were his speciality. How he came to master the foreigners' processes so thoroughly that his ware is equal to fine Italian majolica has never transpired. It is certain, however, that he possessed all their secrets, since in his will, dated 1590, he bequeathed to his nephew "his tools and his recipes for colours." His heir does not appear to have taken advantage of the legacy, for no more painted faïence was made at Nimes after the death of Sigalon.

Three pieces coming from his atelier, if not actually made by his hand, have been authenticated. Two of them passed from the Tollin collection into that of the Duke of Dino. One, a hunting bottle, is inscribed with the motto: "SEIGNEVR · iE · ESPERE · EN · TOY." The other, a basin, has the same device, with a monogram formed of two I's and two C's, and the inscription: "NIMES, 1582." At the sale of the collection the pieces fetched 9,200 frs. and 4,400 frs. respectively. A bottle in the possession of Baron Gustave de Rothschild bears the date 1581. But for the word Nimes, which occurs upon one of these specimens, they would be taken for good examples of Urbino, or Castel Durante majolica.

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LYONS.

FIG. 5.—DISH WITH THE TRIUMPH OF GALATEA
IN POLYCHROME. ITALIAN STYLE.
D. 19 in. (*See p. 12.*)



NIMES.

FIGS. 6 AND 7.—HUNTING BOTTLE AND BASIN.
 ATTRIBUTED TO SIGALON.

(See p. 44.)

IV.

NEVERS.

DIJON—MEILLONAS—LA FOREST.

NEVERS.

THE appearance of a truly artistic pottery can only coincide with the efflorescence of all sumptuary arts ; moreover, the very birth and growth of a new ware of unprecedented merit often depends on the individual support of an influential patron.

Whenever the vulgar pots and pans which, for centuries, had satisfied the daily requirements of the people, happened to assume the form of elaborate and refined vessels of recognised beauty and actual pecuniary value, we find that the transformation has, in most cases, taken place under the ægis of some munificent Mæcenas, personally interested in a promising invention, and anxious to promote its development for the benefit of all. We may realise, for instance, that the decorative pottery of Palissy might never have gone beyond the stage of unproductive trials had it not been introduced to the attention of princes and noblemen by his devoted protectors, the Connétable de Montmorency and Count Antoine de Ponts. On the other hand, we notice that when such direct patronage was denied, the growth of a fine ceramic innovation was nipped in the bud. The failure of the Italian majolists to establish their art at Lyons is an instance of the inadequacy of unsupported efforts.

The practice of this very art of Italian majolica, which several independent attempts had been powerless to acclimatise in France, was at last to enter on a course of brilliant and unbroken success, when it was introduced at Nevers at the instigation, and under the protection, of the Duke Louis de Gonzague.

The Mantuan prince had become Duke of Nivernais, in 1565, by his marriage with the eldest daughter of the late Duke. A lover of the fine arts, he liked to surround himself with artists, literary men, and scientists. He summoned from Italy many clever craftsmen, and entrusted them with the care of establishing in his Duchy the artistic handicrafts which had attained their highest development in his native country. If the manufacture of painted faïence was at last carried on at Nevers in good earnest, it was, indubitably, in compliance with the Duke's express wishes and owing to the fostering care and the financial support he lavished on the conduct of his favourite scheme. Some uncertainty prevails, however, as to the name of the majolist who brought it so speedily into realisation that as early as 1590 the faïence factory had become important enough to be praised, as one of the glories of the town, in the dedicatory epistle to Louis de Gonzague, placed by G. de Claves at the head of his book: "*Apologia Argiropeiæ, etc.*"

The credit may belong to one Scipion Gambin, described as a "potter residing in the town of Nevers" in a baptismal register, on the occasion of his standing godfather to a child in 1592. He was probably related to the Julien Gambin of Faenza, previously mentioned in connection with the faïence made at Lyons. As the earliest productions of Nevers are decorated with subjects and ornamentation denoting the influence of the Faenza school, they should, therefore, be attributed to an artist hailing from that town. Unfortunately, S. Gambin's name does not occur again in any other official document.

The brothers Conrade appear to have a stronger claim to be considered the founders of a prosperous industry; at any rate their effective participation in its establishment cannot be made the subject of a doubt.

Dominic Conrade, a gentleman from Albissola, a small town near Savona, came to France at an early age, and had fought in the battles of the French army, before he was granted letters of naturalisation by Henri III. in 1572. Albissola was celebrated

PLATE V.

NEVERS.

Flask: Apollo and Daphne.

(ITALIAN STYLE.)

H. $12\frac{1}{4}$ in. W. 10 in.



for its majolica, and it is probable that D. Conrade tried his hand at faïence-making before he obtained ducal patronage. The fact is certain in regard to his brother Augustin.

Conrade came to Nevers towards 1584; he is reported to have sent to Paris four "buffets" of faïence of his own manufacture at the same period.

The names of three brothers appear for the first time in the parish registers at the date 1602. They are given in the following order :

Dominique Conrade, master potter in faïence ware.

Baptiste Conrade, master potter and faïence modeller.

Augustin Conrade, potter.

The Conrades, who belonged to the nobility of Savona, do not seem to have lost caste by embracing the potter's handicraft. In the same register, under the year 1604, the name of the eldest brother Dominique is entered with his full title as "Seigneur Dominique de Conrade"; that of his younger brother as "Baptiste Conrade, honorable homme."

Louis de Gonzague, the first patron of the Nevers potters, died in 1595, but his son, Charles de Gonzague, continued to show an undiminished interest in the progress of the manufacture established by his father. He kept in constant communication with the masters, and loaded them with special favours. They were received at court, and were treated there on a footing of equality with all the courtiers of high rank. Dominique inhabited, in close proximity to the Duke's Palace, a pleasant country house of his own; as the factory was situated in the town he could in this way keep his private life quite independent from business duties.

Baptiste, having had a son born to him, Charles de Gonzague and Princess Renée de Lorraine stood sponsors to the child. This child, Augustin the younger, received a superior education, and became first physician of the Queen of Poland, Marie de Gonzague. Augustin's sisters married personages of importance in the Nivernais and in Poland.

The son and grandson of Dominique remained potters, and in possession of the factory, which under their direction was greatly improved and enlarged. They kept, however, their social position as "Gentlemen." The son, Antoine, served fourteen years in the French army before settling down as a potter. From 1634 his name occurs frequently in the registers; first simply as "Master faïencier," and later on as "Gentleman and faïencier to the King's household," and "Brigadier of a troop of the Queen's Light Horse." He died in 1658, leaving his factory in the hands of his son Dominique, the last of the Conrades, who inherited also his official dignities.

During thirty years the Conrade family had enjoyed the undisputed possession of the faïence industry at Nevers, sending their products all over the kingdom. Their business was so prosperous that in 1632 B. Bourcier, who styled himself "Enameller to the Queen-Mother," was induced to start a competitive factory; he was not, however, rewarded with any success. The works did not pass into the possession of his descendants, but the Bourciers distinguished themselves as faïence painters for four generations.

Twenty years after, in 1652, Nicholas Estienne opened a faïence factory at the sign of the "Ecce Homo." About the same time Pierre Custode established another one at the sign of "the Ostrich." Both were erected in the same street where the Conrade factory was situated, and where Dominique Conrade, the younger, was still at work, and was so to remain up to his death, which occurred in 1658.

The Custodes had originally come from Italy as assistants to the Conrades; it was after Pierre Custode had worked with them at Nevers for twenty years that he decided to commence business on his own account. He was very successful in his enterprise, his works became the most important in the town; they were closed only in the first part of the nineteenth century. The Custode family gave no fewer than seven generations of potters to the trade.



NEVERS.

FIG. 8.—FAÏENCE TABLET IN COLOURS: THE
SIGNBOARD OF A MANUFACTORY—
NAME OF THE MASTER UNKNOWN.

L. 14 in. (See p. 50.)

Owing to the establishment of these and other factories, a large number of workmen had become proficient in the practice of the art, so that the Nevers craft could supply reliable managers and skilled operatives to any master potter willing to embark on the manufacture of white faïence. It was from this source that several faïence manufactories, concurrently started in distant places, obtained their first contingent of potters and painters. At Rouen, for instance, where the largest centre of French manufacture was soon to be settled, all preliminary difficulties were smoothed by the ready adoption of the well-tried processes brought over by the Nevers craftsmen. The condition of the trade was still prosperous in 1735, if we trust to the glowing account of the factories and their productions given at that date by Du Frasnay in his poem "La Fayence," published in the *Mercure de France*.

It was only later on that the widespread development of the French faïence trade caused the rapid decline of the local industry. In 1792, however, twelve faïence works were still in activity at Nevers. But the days were over in which a potter could follow his artistic tendencies. The ware, no longer intended to adorn the abodes of the great and the wealthy, appealed only to the popular taste, and sought purchasers in the market-place by a display of catching images, roughly dashed in with a few strokes of crude colour upon homely vessels—showy articles to be had for a few sous.

Even at its best period, the Nevers faïence does not commend itself by any particular degree of excellence. Nevertheless, as it is of comparative rarity, the early examples of it are highly valued by collectors. It is a matter of regret that no specimen of the work made by Scipion Gambin, or any other Italian majolist, at the instigation and under the patronage of the Duke Louis de Gonzague, has ever been pointed out. If any such specimen is still in existence it is confounded with all the similar pieces showing an unmistakable Italian influence, and broadly attributed to the Conrades. They are all painted in

the debased style of the Savona majolica, with mythological or religious subjects copied from contemporary engravings. In some technical points, however, they differ sufficiently from their foreign prototypes to permit of a correct attribution.

The Nevers clay and glaze are of particular hardness; the ware having been fired at a degree of heat at which the paintings of Faenza and Savona would have melted and run together. On the Nevers ware the colours are fast enough, but rather weak in tint; the manganese turns to pale violet, the copper green and the antimony yellow lose much of their normal intensity, and the red is always absent. The lead-glaze, or Marzacotto, with which the Italians used to cover the painting after it had been executed upon the stanniferous enamel, to impart to the colours additional brilliance, was never employed.

In its artistic treatment the faïence of the Conrades never reached the standard of good Italian majolica. The drawing of the figures is awkward and incorrect in the extreme; the effects of colour decidedly poor. It must be acknowledged that the gentlemen-potters, experienced manufacturers and clever business men as they may have been, were but mediocre artists, nor were they ever assisted by a truly talented painter.

To the Conrades is due the introduction of a style of decoration which, if not always artistic in design, had at least the merit of being very effective. Upon a plain ground of intense and bright cobalt blue, flowers and foliage, birds, animals, or figures of conventional treatment were "impasted" in opaque white enamel. This is known as the "Persian style." But if it bears a distant likeness to the Persian ware, which the makers had very little chance of seeing and imitating, that is no more than a curious coincidence. In all probability this kind of decoration arose from the imitation of enamel painting on copper. Several enamellers in the Limoges style had successfully practised their art in the town long before the coming of the first *faïenciers*. Be that as it may, the early specimens with white impasto upon

PLATE VI.

NEVERS.

Plateau: Lion-hunting.

(After TEMPESTA.)

D. $22\frac{1}{2}$ in.



a brilliant blue ground are considered as the most typical productions of the Nevers factories.

To the Italian style of design succeeded the pseudo-Oriental patterns. The Dutch had brought into fashion a free interpretation of Chinese and Japanese models; the French faïence decorated in the same manner was an imitation of the ware imported from Holland rather than of the genuine Eastern porcelain. This transformation occurred towards 1640, at which time mythological subjects seem to have been completely abandoned.

No distinctive style ever came out of the various modes of decoration that Nevers borrowed in succession from the more enterprising factories which had taken the lead of the trade by bringing out a fresh style of ornamentation strikingly original and effective. It was at first the "lambrequins" and radiating patterns of Rouen; then the Berain and Toro designs of Moustiers; and, lastly, the rococo scrolls of Dresden, which were put under contribution by the Nevers manufacturers, when they realised the necessity of painting their faïence with acceptable imitations of the style most in demand at the moment.

Towards 1790 all efforts to keep pace with the variations of fashion had been definitely given up. A cheap kind of routine painting had established itself in the trade, and it long continued to prevail without change. Thousands of domestic vessels potted by the twelve factories of the town were enlivened with dashes of gaudy colours by the drudges of the painting shops. Coarse and unseemly as the workmanship was bound to be, its very boldness and freedom imparted to it a charm denied to all that is purely mechanical. Nor were fancy and imagination altogether banished from the production, for by the side of the humdrum pattern reproduced by all hands we find an occasional subject of actuality, a presentation piece, which denotes personal taste and wit on the part of the painter. All religious customs were dear to the Nivernais people; a faïence dish, or a jug inscribed and adorned

with the name and representation of a patron saint, were held to be the most appropriate presents to be offered to a friend on some momentous occasion; pieces of that description are still abundant. At all periods coloured statuettes of a religious character were extensively produced by the *faïenciers*. The ability of the sculptor is just on a level with that of the painter, in no case have they any pretension to artistic merit.

The great revolution of 1789 had its eventful course illustrated from day to day upon the Nevers faïence in telling emblems and short inscriptions which reflected the national aspirations and recorded the accomplished facts. Immense consignments of it were constantly despatched to the North and West of France; and the itinerant dealer who carried his stock of cheap crockery from fair to fair had for a long time nothing else to offer to his habitual customers. Special collectors have brought together comprehensive series of a ware, highly interesting from the historical point of view, but somewhat misnamed as "Patriotic faïence." In whatever province the specimens may now be found, the larger number of them originally came from the Nevers factories.

A regrettable absence of marks, and the flagrant imitation of all the successful types of other manufactures, render the identification of genuine examples of Nevers a matter of difficulty; but certain peculiarities in the technique are often sufficient to determine the true *provenance* of an otherwise doubtful piece. The occasional monograms or names affixed to isolated specimens are of too rare occurrence to be of much use. I have, however, given a few of these latter. In the town of Nevers a museum has been formed in which all the phases of the local productions are well represented.

Of the minor factories of the Nivernais, La Charité-sur-Loire—La Noce—Bois-le-Comte—Saint-Verain—Varzy, there is little to say beyond recording their names.



NEVERS.

FIG. 9.—DRINKING BOTTLE—ITALIAN STYLE.
H. 14 in.

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DIJON.

The mustard of Dijon was without a rival in France, and for a long period it was made the object of a considerable trade. It was sold in faïence pots, the making of which kept several factories tolerably busy for close on two centuries.

A collection of Dijon faïence is, I fear, bound to shine chiefly by the variety of its mustard pots. Some of them, aristocratic in appearance, are painted with the royal arms and ornamented in the Nevers style ; the rest seem sadly plebeian, bearing only the name of the contents. Then, there are the large jars in which the retailer kept the tasty condiment, to be doled out in pennyworths. Scrolls and flowers engarland the inscription : "Moutarde de Dijon," which denotes that the jar is intended for the grocer's shop ; when destined for the apothecary's it becomes, of course, "Mustarda Dijonensis." If I add to this that the rules of fashion, which do not respect even mustard pots, caused several transformations of the shape as time went on—I shall have said enough to show that such a collection may be formed, but that it would make a rather singular assemblage.

A volume prepossessing enough in its outward appearance to invite a glance through its pages, has been devoted to the history of the Dijon faïence ; it must not be expected that the

further examination of a book written on a subject of such narrow scope can greatly assist the advance of general ceramic knowledge. It is not, however, without interest for the study of provincial industry. We learn from it that between 1669 and 1854 the town had had four factories, all chiefly busied in supplying the requirements of the mustard trade. It goes without saying that other articles were also manufactured. The Nevers style, introduced by one Dupont, a Nivernais potter, in 1669, is recognisable on the few painted pieces that have been authenticated. Among them must be mentioned a circular travelling bottle bearing the image of Saint-Benigne, the patron saint of Dijon, and the remaining specimens of a dinner service once belonging to the college "Des Godrans."

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MEILLONAS.

Very little of the modest faïence made at Meillonas has drifted into the collections, and the few specimens which have thus escaped destruction do not strike one as being particularly attractive. Nevertheless its history is well worth telling; it affords a curious picture of the conditions under which ceramic industry was sometimes carried on during the eighteenth century.

At Meillonas, a hamlet situated in the vicinity of Bourg (Ain), the making of coarse pottery had been for a century the staple trade of the inhabitants. The Lord of the Manor, Hugues de Marron, an impecunious gentleman full of schemes and projects, conceived the idea of trying the manufacture of painted faïence, a business which was then considered as a sure way to fortune. Several ventures in which he had embarked previously, such as the opening of a stone quarry, and digging for coals on his estate, had resulted in complete failure. He was

PLATE VII.

NEVERS.

Plateau: Enamelled Decoration on Persian Blue
Ground.

D. $17\frac{1}{2}$ in.

(See p. 53.)



full of confidence in the success of his new enterprise. In the year 1760 the very basements of his castle were appropriated as workshops; one or two ovens were put up at the back of the building, and he engaged the whole staff of workmen just dismissed from a faïence factory which had come to grief in the province of Nivernais. The Baron was to be his own practical manager, and the Baroness, his wife, took the artistic direction under her care. She could paint with taste and skill, and several pieces decorated by her own hand still remain in the possession of the family. One Pidoux, who has signed some of his work with his name, was the chief artist.

For years the manufacture went on quietly, assisted by a small subsidy and other privileges granted by the Municipality of Bourg. The ware was first made in imitation of Nevers and Moustiers, then of Marseilles. In 1794, Hugues de Marron was arrested as a suspected aristocrat by order of the Revolutionary tribunal, sentenced to death, and executed at Lyons. With his death the Meillonas factory came to an end.

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LA FOREST.

Modest as may be the standing of the factories of the French Savoy, they supplied with painted faïence a large region where examples of a more costly ware seldom penetrated, and the place they occupied is conspicuously marked upon the map of ceramic geography.

Nothing is known about the introduction of the faïence industry in the Alpine village of Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne, but the presence in collections of hunting bottles and dishes, decorated with figures and subjects in the Nevers style, and bearing, together with that name, dates ranging from 1718 to 1754, leave no doubt as to the existence of a permanent factory there.

We know more of the circumstances of the more important works of La Forest, near Chambéry. They were founded in 1730 by Bouchard, an ironmonger from the last named town, for the purpose of providing the gentlefolk of the province with attractive dinner services. The establishment of the manufacture was entrusted to two clever faïenciers from Nevers, A. Mogery and Mietaz, who brought with them all the assistants they required. Such conditions determined the character that the ware assumed at the commencement. If any speciality is, however, to be noticed in the productions of La Forest, it is that the painting shows more careful treatment than the coarse and broad decoration of the late Nevers ware. A close examination of the authenticated specimens of the Savoy faïence leaves us under the impression that it has only to be better known to be appreciated as it deserves.

The taste for pseudo-Chinese patterns, or the flowers, garlands, and landscapes borrowed from Nevers, did not last long. The fashion for Rouen, and especially for Moustiers designs, soon asserted its sway over this factory, as it had done over so many others, a strong partiality being evinced for the grotesque figures of J. Callot, and other ludicrous caricatures. Huge earthenware stoves, amusingly decorated in that manner, found a ready sale. A remarkable example of the kind is preserved in the museum at Aix-les-Bains.

After a short period of prosperity affairs began to take a bad turn. Promising experiments had been made for the manufacture of porcelain and earthenware. But all the improvements introduced by Bouchard could not avert the final collapse, which occurred at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The full name of La Forest occurs upon some of the choicest pieces.

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PLATE VIII.

NEVERS.

Ewer, Painted in Blue in Dutch Style.

H. 17 in. Diam. of base, $5\frac{3}{4}$ in.





NEVERS.

FIG. 10.—EWER: ITALIAN STYLE.

H. 21 in.



NEVERS.

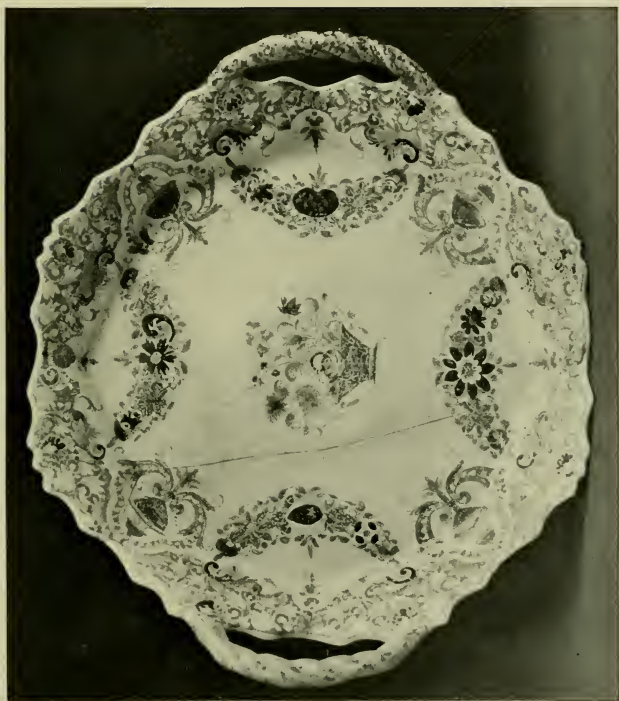
FIG. 11.—EWER: PERSIAN-BLUE GROUND,
DECORATED IN WHITE ENAMEL.
H. 27 in.



NEVERS.

FIG. 12.—TRAVELLING BOTTLE PAINTED IN BLUE.

H. 14 in.



WEILLONAS.

FIG. 13.—DISH : POLYCHROME DECORATION.

(See p. 56.)



V.

ROUEN.

SAINT-CLOUD—PARIS—SINCENY—LILLE—VALENCIENNES—

SAINT-AMAND-LES-EAUX—SAINT-DENIS-SUR-SAR-TON.

ROUEN.

ALL previous attempts to acclimatise, upon French soil, the manufacture of foreign faïence with stanniferous enamel, sinks into insignificance when compared with what was readily accomplished at Rouen when times were at last ripe for the introduction of a new kind of pottery of a truly national character, which should emulate, in shapes and designs, the elegance and novelty displayed in the productions of other branches of decorative art. Such was to be the ware which alone could gratify the taste of the refined Frenchman; it was reserved to Edme Poterat to bring this desideratum into full realisation.

One hundred years before Poterat commenced to manufacture white faïence on a thoroughly practical basis, Masseot Abaquesne, a potter, said to be of French nationality, but who had certainly learned with the Italians the art of majolica painting, was established as a tilemaker in a suburb of Rouen. From such work of his hand as has been preserved to us, we may judge that he had mastered all the secrets of the technical part of the business and that he was, besides, a designer of no mean ability. The painted tile pavements he executed between 1542 and 1557 for the Castles of Ecouen, La Bastie, and other places, would have done credit to the best majolists of Faenza or Urbino.

But if Masseot Abaquesne and his tile pavements must have their place in the general history of ceramic art, they can scarcely be spoken of in connection with the progress of French pottery; at any rate, his isolated achievements had no influence

on its rise and development. He followed entirely an Italian tradition already obsolete, and this, the fag end of an art in rapid decline, could not be accepted in France as containing the germ of a youthful and promising handicraft. He worked as a potter, ignored by the rest of the trade, and soon after his death his very name was forgotten by all.

A rare travelling-bottle, in the Sèvres Museum, bearing the arms of an abbot of Lisieux who lived in 1540, and a painted decoration of the same character as that of the tile pavements, may be attributed to Rouen. It tends to show that ornamental ware was also made at this early period.

Similar ventures had been tried at several points in France, all to end without leaving any appreciable result. At Nevers only, the making of a debased kind of majolica had subsisted for a longer time, owing to the liberal support of a princely patron.

A truly French faïence may be said to have originated at Rouen in 1644, the year in which Nicholas Poirel applied for the grant of royal letters patent, that would secure to him the sole rights of making white and painted ware in the province of Normandy. The short-lived factory of Abaquesne had left no traces, and the licence was granted on the ground that faïence had never before been made in the town.

When Nicholas Poirel, Sieur de Grandval, a man of influence at Court, where he filled the office of usher to the Queen's room, petitioned for this royal privilege, he was probably acting on behalf of a partner, Edme Poterat, Sieur de St. Etienne, who is said to have had some previous knowledge of pottery manufacture. The name of Poirel is never mentioned in any of the documents which refer to the carrying on of the trade, while in the final deed of lease of the building and grounds on which the factory had been established, we find that in 1647 Edme Poterat had already been for two years making faïence on the premises, and he alone appears in this and other deeds as "the manufacturer."

PLATE IX.

ROUEN.

Armorial Plateau.

D. $22\frac{1}{4}$ in.

(*See p. 68.*)





ROUEN.

FIG 14.—TRAVELLING BOTTLE: ITALIAN STYLE.
1540? ON THE REVERSE SIDE THE
ARMS OF AN ABBOT OF LISIEUX.
H 14 in. (*See p. 62.*)

We have seen that the technical processes of *faïence*-making were still practised at Nevers. We may fairly assume that E. Poterat obtained from that centre the ready means of starting operations, with the assistance of a group of fully experienced workmen. In the ceramic museum of Rouen are two of the earliest pieces, both inscribed and dated "*Fait à Rouen, 1647,*" which are manifestly painted in the Nevers style. The name of one of the Custodes, a family of Nevers *faïenciers*, figures on the list of the men at work in Poterat's factory.

Such remnants of the Italian and Dutch taste imported by the foreigners were to disappear as soon as the decoration of the ware was entirely entrusted to French operatives. These latter—who lacked the special training that their predecessors had received in the Faenza and Delft workshops—were unequal to the task of painting either mythological figures and battle-scenes, or creditable imitations of Oriental porcelain. The few pieces of that description, which may be attributed to the trial period, show how wise it was on the part of the manufacturer to replace an uncongenial style by one better suited to the capabilities of his men. A completely new method of decoration was adopted, which did not require much artistic ability in the execution of the work. It consisted in the application to *faïence* painting of the purely ornamental motives which embellished the printed books, the delicate lace, the silk embroideries, and the inlaid wood of contemporary skilful craftsmen. So simple were the details entering into the most complicated scheme of ornamentation, that when a talented designer had given his suggestion for the general arrangement, anyone ever so little acquainted with the handling of a paint-brush could fill in the outlines he had previously traced upon the piece to be decorated.

From a symmetrical and well-balanced repetition of the same unpretentious arabesques, a highly decorative effect was obtained. We find the finest examples of this style in the large platters on which a tasteful disposition of delicate ornaments

radiate from the centre, like the spokes of a wheel, or descend from the border in alternate compartments.

These huge platters were not, by-the-bye, a mere ornament for the dresser; they were an indispensable item for the service of the table. As the custom of the day required that at a banquet all the viands should appear on the board, such dishes are mentioned in the price lists of the manufacturers as calculated to hold from twelve to fifteen chickens, or twenty partridges; this number of fowls having to be served on festive occasions.

As early as 1663 the results accomplished by Poterat had attracted the attention of Colbert. In the MS. memoir on the conditions of the industries of the realm, which the great statesman caused to be indited in that year, appear the following observations: "To encourage and reward the faïenciers of Rouen and the neighbourhood, and to stimulate competition among them. To supply them with good designs, and to make them work for the King." This first instance of official solicitude proved a great incentive to the development of the faïence industry at Rouen; it was to lead, a few years later, to the King himself extending a direct patronage to the potters.

We notice that in Colbert's Memoir reference is made to "several" manufacturers competing against each other. The patent obtained by Poirel de Grandval had soon become a dead letter. Taking advantage of some flaws in the specification, enterprising rivals had set up their faïence factories in opposition to that of Poterat. The first was one Bouttin, who described himself as a painter and sculptor in faïence. In vain Poterat put the law in motion for the defence of his rights; injunction after injunction was served on the trespasser, but they could not be enforced, and Bouttin was left to continue his work unhindered. His example was soon afterwards followed by five more potters, all established in the suburb of Saint-Sever, and imitating as nearly as they could the successful ware of the original manufacture.



ROUEN.

FIG. 15.—DRINKING BOTTLE : DECORATION IN
BLUE AND RED. DUTCH STYLE.
EARLY PERIOD.

H. 16 in. (*See p. 67.*)

Edme Poterat's eldest son was, from his early days, associated with his father's labours. A man of exceptional abilities, Louis Poterat took a large share in the development of the enterprise; most of the improvements introduced in the conduct of the manufacture may be placed to his credit. He never had, however, a partner's share in the business. On his marriage with Madeleine de Laval in 1668—he was then twenty-seven years of age—he is described in the deed of settlement as being in the employ of his father, at a yearly salary of one thousand livres. Like many of the best potters of the time, he nourished the ambition of discovering the secret of translucent porcelain. More fortunate than any of them, he accomplished the discovery with complete success. The specimens of Poterat's porcelain so far identified so closely approach to excellence that, were it not that fragments and wasters of the same order have been unearthed from the site of the old factory—a discovery which settles the point of authenticity beyond doubt—one might refuse to believe that they were the fruits of the first experiments of a *faïence* maker. In the town of Rouen, private collectors have brought together a sufficient number of genuine examples to make it evident that the translucent ware invented by Poterat was more than a promise, or an imperfect production still in need of improvement. Far from it, for its body and glaze are of an unmistakable nature; he had actually determined the composition of the true soft porcelain of France, the same which in the hands of other manufacturers was to excite, shortly afterwards, the admiration of all Europe. Poterat did not derive much honour or profit from his invention; he finally abandoned any further experiments in that direction; the making of painted *faïence* having proved far more convenient and remunerative.

But the Rouen porcelain did not die without leaving issue. It had, indeed, a long lineal descent. The firstborn was the Saint-Cloud soft china, regularly manufactured in 1698, by the brothers Chicanneau. I am not prepared to produce any

authorities that would definitely establish the parentage; but the specimens of both places present technical and decorative features so perfectly identical, that little more is required to render the filiation clearly apparent, nay, almost undeniable. A fact, the probable connection of which with the subject has not yet been properly investigated, is, that in the list of Rouen faïence painters given by A. Pottier figures the name of one Chicanneau. One might fairly assume that the man either purchased, or appropriated by other means, the secret processes of Poterat, and turned them to good account in the factory he established at Saint-Cloud. It was long admitted that that place was the starting point from which the manufacture of soft china originated in France. If we consider the prior claim that can now be maintained in favour of Rouen, we may fully realise the important position that Poterat's discovery should occupy in the history of the ceramic art.

Up to the year 1673 Louis Poterat lived and worked at his father's factory. The experiments he was making towards the discovery of a translucent ware seem, however, to have been conducted independently of his management of this work, and for his private benefit. In their successful results he found the means of getting free from parental bondage, and starting in business on his own account.

His invention of a porcelain ware that had never been made before served him as a pretext to apply for a licence to make painted faïence in conjunction with it. To guard against the eventualities of a venturesome undertaking, he argued that his porcelain could only be safely fired in the central part of an oven filled with ordinary faïence ware. On this representation he obtained in 1673, and for a period of thirty years, a royal privilege, not only for the sole making of porcelain, but also for the manufacture of "Violette" faïence, painted in blue and other colours, after the manner used in Holland. The previous rights vested in Poirel de Grandval were overlooked

PLATE X.

ROUEN.

Bust of Apollo and Stand.

(By NICHOLAS FOUQUAY.)

H. of Bust, 2 ft. 9 in. W. of Bust, 1 ft. 11 in.

H. of Pedestal, 4 ft. 7 in.

(See p. 69.)





ROUEN.

FIG. 16.—FOUNTAIN WITH POLYCHROME
DECORATION: ARMS OF HENRI
DE MONTMORENCY, DUKE OF
LUXEMBOURG.

H. 44 in. (*See p. 58.*)

on account of the benefit that would accrue to the town from the introduction of a new industry.

Examples of the so-called "Hollandish" style are rather uncommon. Moreover, every Rouen piece which affects a distant imitation of the pseudo-Chinese subjects of the Dutch ware is in most cases completed with festoons and garlands in the French taste. The original "lambrequins" and embroidery patterns, on the scalloped compartments of which delicate white traceries are reserved on a pure blue ground, were the favourite productions of the Poterats, father and son. Of this we require no better proof than the fact that the porcelain of Louis Poterat is decorated in that style.

In the same year that Louis Poterat separated from his father, the latter became sole proprietor of the concern, Poirel de Grandval, who had up to that time kept an interest in it as a "sleeping" partner, having transferred to him all his rights during the unexpired run of the patent. Edme Poterat, Sieur de Saint-Etienne and Seigneur d'Emendreville, died in 1687 at the age of seventy-five years; his heirs and successors were his widow and his second son, Michel. Louis Poterat survived his father until 1696. When the term of the original privilege came to an end, in 1696, four faïence works were started at Rouen in the same year.

The faïence industry was soon to enter into its most brilliant and prosperous period; the number of factories increased to six, independently of the two establishments still in the hands of the Poterat family; they gave employment to over two thousand hands. Its development was singularly fostered by circumstances. The sudden infatuation for services of Rouen faïence which seized the French aristocracy gave to the manufacture an unexpected impetus. In the year 1709 the Government of Louis XIV. had come to the end of its financial resources. No more money could be extracted from the over-burdened taxpayers, and money was urgently required to meet the cost of an endless war, and to relieve the crying

misery of some provinces ruined by famine and inundation. At this juncture the King decided to send his gold and silver plate, including the throne in massive silver, to the mint to be converted into coin, and he expressed the wish that all patriotic noblemen should follow his example. A wish of the monarch was as good as an order; no courtier dared to demur in complying with the suggestion, and loads of precious silver plate consequently found their way to the melting pots.

Meantime a substitute had to be procured to take, upon the dresser and the table, the place of the departed dishes and vessels. It was found in the sets of painted faïence, patronised up to that time by the middle classes. All that the crockery shops of town or country contained in the way of sets of that description was pounced upon by rank and fashion. Frantic purchasers "set the ware on fire," as Saint Simon has it in his "*Mémoires*," and in a week's time not a single service of painted faïence could be obtained in the trade. Nothing was left to the late-comers but to send their orders to Rouen and wait till they had been executed. The manufacturers were overloaded with commissions; no incentive could have been more powerful to make them try to deserve praises, reward, and further patronage from so many unexpected customers. A ware of a very superior order could henceforth be painted regardless of cost. A dinner-set which was to bear the illustrious coat of arms of a noble duke, and grace the banqueting-hall of a palace, could never be too expensively and handsomely decorated. Urged by such inspiring circumstances, potters and painters surpassed themselves, and from that moment the original style of the Rouen faïence assumed its most typical expression. Elegant and effective as they always are, the essential characteristic of the most elaborate pieces is that they do not set up any pretensions to being anything but objects of domestic use. All the examples of the ware, enlivened with the intricate traceries of the embroidery patterns, whether they be the huge platter



ROUEN.

FIG. 17.—PLATEAU DECORATED IN BLUE IN THE
BERRAIN STYLE.
L. 26 in.

or the diminutive ewer, certainly look their best when displayed upon the dining table. Indeed, nothing more appropriate to the purpose, and superior in decorative effect, can be said to exist among the productions of the ceramic art that pretend to be at once useful and ornamental.

A decided preponderance of household requisites did not, however, exclude variety in the aggregate of manufactured pieces. As early as 1725, two leading *faïenciers* had distinguished themselves by bringing out a series of decorative objects much above the common run of commercial productions. For instance, the celestial and terrestrial globes made by Madame Lecoq de Villeray were very superior in size and costliness of treatment to anything that had been attempted before. These ceramic edicules, which stand over four feet in height, are composed of globes seventeen inches in diameter, supported either by a figure of Atlas or by a rectangular pedestal resting on four lions; the whole being covered by a polychromatic decoration. A pair of these globes, in the Rouen Museum, are painted with allegorical figures, and bear the inscription: "Peint par Pierre Chapelle, à Rouen, 1725."

Of still more artistic pretensions are the five life-size busts of Apollo, and the Four Seasons, becomingly completed by an architectonic stand, also richly painted in colours, and made at about the same period by Nicholas Fouquay. These busts once adorned the Hamilton Palace. One of them was given by the Duke to the South Kensington Museum, the four others were purchased for the Louvre. It may be stated here that Madame de Villeray and N. Fouquay, the makers of these exceptional pieces, owned the two factories founded by the Poterats; the finest *faïence* ever made at Rouen is said to have come from their works.

Among the articles of purely ornamental character manufactured at the time must be mentioned the garden vases of large dimensions, the mantelpieces and stoves, the tile panels with figure subjects, the columns and brackets, and other picturesque accessories of architectural decoration.

Four distinctive styles of surface ornamentation distinguish the corresponding periods of the Rouen manufacture. Setting aside the works in the Italian and Dutch taste—attributable to the Nevers workmen, and of more historic than artistic interest—we shall place on the first line those particular “Lambrequins” and “Embroidery” patterns which the Norman potter may so justly claim as his own. If the supremacy of Rouen faïence over all other kinds of French ware stands incontestable, it is due chiefly to the adoption of these matchless patterns, and to the pleasant effect obtained by the symmetrical disposition of elegant arabesques, either reserved in white on a blue field, or traced in blue upon a white ground. One of the most happy applications of the same principles is seen in the pieces on which the arabesques are painted in dark blue upon a bright yellow ground. Of this kind very few examples remain; all of them are of superior treatment, and the collector of Rouen ware values them above everything. We have already seen that the earliest display of the “radiating” and “embroidery” patterns is due to the Poterats, father and son. Their successors introduced many novelties, but they did not discard the original style for many years afterwards.

These staple patterns, produced at first in cobalt blue, received a notable modification from the discovery and the liberal use of a bright and opaque red, unknown to the Nevers, and, indeed, at that time, to all other French potters. How it happened that this scarce material, a natural red earth which can stand the highest degree of firing without losing anything of its brilliance, was brought over to Rouen, has never transpired. The mineral is only obtainable from the small town of Thiviers in Périgord; for a long time this has been one of the most jealously guarded secrets of the trade. A presentation bowl in the town museum, inscribed “BRUMENT, 1699,” is the earliest piece on which we see the opaque red appear in connection with a date. It is needless to say that the use of that colour may be anterior by a few years.

PLATE XI.

ROUEN.

Vase and Cover: "Lambrequins" Decoration.

H. 13 in. D. of base, 6 in.

(See p. 70.)





ROUEN.

FIG. 18.—FOUNTAIN : POLYCHROME DECORATION.
H. 38 in.

The remarkable bowl, figured in A. Pottier's work on plate VII., affords a good example of the polychrome and so-called Oriental style adopted in the second period. It has a would-be Chinese figure painted in the centre, but the surrounding, decoration is in the regular taste of the "radiating Lambrequins." All the specimens included in the same group are but reproductions of the Chinese and Japanese fantasies freely indulged in by the French decorative artists of the day, seldom, if ever, actual copies of Oriental porcelain. As a matter of fact, deceitful imitations of the ware, such as were produced in Holland, were never attempted at Rouen. The speciality of the pseudo-Chinese subjects is attributed to Guillibaud, who worked in 1720. He went so far as to reproduce, accurately enough, the trellised borders of the foreign models, but his figures and flowers obviously betray their local origin. A few pieces, grounded all over with dark blue, and enamelled with conventional flowers in opaque white, may be classed with the same group.

A "Rocaille style" was in full bloom towards 1750; it constitutes the third period. Although closely linked with the "Oriental" patterns by their artistic treatment, the Rocaille subjects evince, nevertheless, a manifest originality. The designs are thoroughly French in character; the decorative panels of Watteau and Boucher, and the etchings of Pillement having supplied the materials of these picturesque arrangements of trophies, scrolls, and garlands. In addition to the presence of brilliant blues, greens, and yellows, the opaque red, applied in thin lines or minute dots, plays a conspicuous part in the general scheme of colour. We shall mention as typical representatives of the taste in vogue at that moment the "Cornucopia" and "Quiver" patterns, which proved such favourites in the trade that they were persisted in long after all other contemporary designs had ceased to be produced.

The last artistic effort of the Rouen potters seems to have taken the form of rather weak imitations of the Strasburg

faïence, with its deeply gadrooned shapes and its over-glaze decoration of realistic flowers painted in transparent enamels, after the style which had originated at Dresden. It was faïence masquerading as porcelain. But this meretricious disguise could not win back for it a popular support gone for ever. The best examples of this order date from 1775; after which painted faïence went rapidly into decline. In 1786 twelve hundred workmen were still at work in the factories; the few factories which were still in existence ten years after could scarcely give occupation to one hundred and fifty hands. The course of ruinous underselling resorted to by the manufacturers at bay, and the consequent degradation of the production—rather than the much complained of importations of English earthenware—had brought the industry to its doom. According to the statistics of 1806 only thirty men were then making white and brown pottery of the commonest description in the town of Rouen. Limoges was sending there its refined porcelain, and the North of France a much appreciated “terre de pipe”; no one at the time seems to have regretted the complete disappearance of the old-fashioned faïence with the stanniferous enamel.

No regular mark was ever adopted by the Rouen factories but a genuine example of the best period could scarcely be passed by unrecognised, so superior is it in design and treatment to the imitations made in other places. A little experience and good judgment are the best guides to the identification of the ware. Upon pieces of incontestable origin we find a multitude of initials, monograms, distinctive signs and numerical figures, most of them of unique occurrence, and seldom attributable to any particular artist or potter. I shall only give a selection of these occasional signs, and will recommend to any collector in want of further information on that point a reference to the list given by A. Pottier. Over 120 different marks are reproduced in that list; I must add that this number has been considerably increased since the publication of his work.

A thorough knowledge of the Rouen ceramic art in all its



ROUEN.

FIG. 19.—HELMET-SHAPED EWER : “ LAMBRE-
QUINS ” DECORATION IN POLYCHROME.
H. 10 in.

forms can be gathered from a studious examination of the town museum. The best period is represented in it by the choicest masterpieces of the leading potters, and the current manufacture of later times by an exhaustive selection of the most popular types. So rich, indeed, so varied, so complete is the collection, that a visit to it will gratify the most sanguine expectations of the connoisseur.

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SAINT-CLOUD.

The vigorous growth of the Rouen manufacture cast off many a fresh shoot to thrive on distant soil. Saint-Cloud

is the earliest factory on record which owes its origin and prosperity to a flagrant appropriation by a servant of the Poterats of the style and processes originated by his masters.

Chicanneau, a Rouen faïence painter, having obtained sufficient experience to qualify as a manufacturer, established himself as such at Saint-Cloud, in close proximity to Paris. His factory was in full working order as early as 1670, for at that date he was supplying large vases for the embellishment of the Trianon of Porcelain. He seems to have been especially favoured with orders for dinner services and other articles intended for the Royal castles, or for national establishments. Specimens of these services painted with the initial letter of the name of the castle surmounted by the Royal crown, are to be seen in ceramic collections. The hospital of Versailles still possesses the complete set of drug pots made by Chicanneau or by his successors.

The Saint-Cloud faïence was, at the first period, decorated with the "Lambrequins" and "lace" patterns imported from Rouen; the treatment of the blue design shows sometimes the peculiarity of being outlined in black. At a later time, wreaths and sprays of conventional flowers, painted in a slate-coloured blue, replaced the original patterns. It is not necessary to recall here what fame and profit Chicanneau derived from the making of a fine porcelain which he had certainly not invented.

The only marks noticed on the faïence as well as on the porcelain of that origin are, either the Sun, in honour of Louis XIV., or the letters S.C.T., standing for Saint-Cloud, Trou. As Trou became proprietor of the works after the death of Chicanneau, whose widow he married, such marks must be referred to the last period of manufacture.

PARIS.

Paris, the cradle of sciences and arts, has always remained indifferent to the improvement of painted faïence. It is true that a crowded capital, in which space is necessarily limited,

PLATE XII.

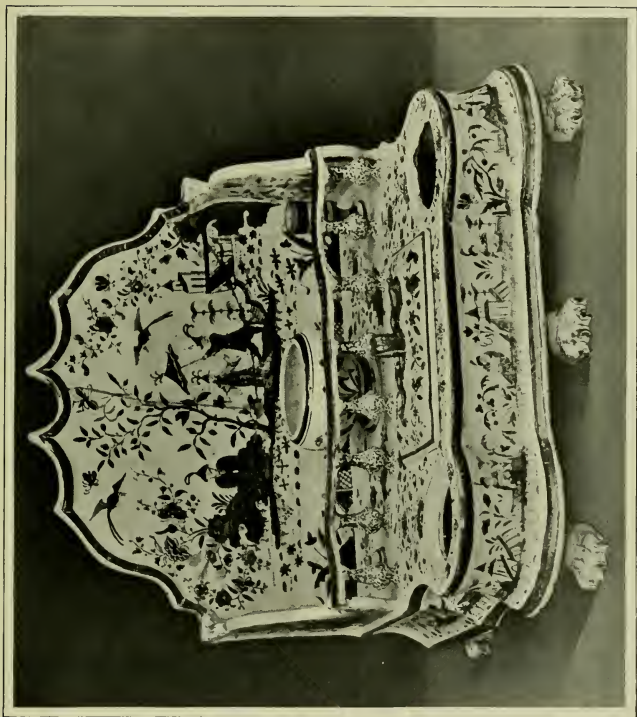
ROUEN.

Plateau: Blue Arabesques on Yellow Ground.

D $22\frac{1}{4}$ in.

(See p. 70.)





ROUEN.

FIG. 20.—INKSTAND; POLYCHROME DECORATION.

L. 15 in.

and where wages are comparatively high, is not the place to be selected for the establishment of important pottery works. Moreover, a municipal edict of 1723 had foreseen the possible eventuality, and forbidden the carrying on of all kindred industries within the area of the city. Accordingly, the manufacture of porcelain had to be prosecuted at Vincennes and Sèvres; that of *faïence* at Saint-Cloud and Sceaux. Little attention has been given to the names of "*faïenciers*" having shops in Paris, who advertised in the almanacs and address-books of the times, on the understanding that they refer to merchants and retailers rather than to actual manufacturers. The most enterprising among these dealers might, at the utmost, have erected a small kiln on the premises and employed one or two painters who could provide certain pieces with such particular emblems, inscriptions, and names as were required by the customer. In this way they could keep up the fallacy that they were selling none but articles of their own making. Be it as it may, the conditions under which the *faïence* trade was conducted in Paris at an early period have been regrettably neglected by the historian. The attempt made by a well-known writer to attribute to Claude Révérend the introduction of the manufacture has proved to be an unfortunate mistake. In the application presented by C. Révérend, of Paris, in 1664, for obtaining a royal privilege for the sole right of selling painted *faïence* in the city, the man argued that, during his stay in Holland, he had discovered the secret of making a white and blue ware of incomparable quality; that he had manufactured, stored up, and left behind in that country a large quantity of goods which he wanted to import into France under the protection of the State, until he could establish in Paris a factory for the making of the ware he had invented. It is easy to detect, under the terms of such a preposterous application, the subterfuge of a shrewd dealer, trying to secure in this way the monopoly of a profitable trade. The privilege he obtained

had, of course, no value whatever. Dutch faïence continued to be imported by other merchants, and Claude Révérend never had a factory of his own.

The number of examples bearing inscriptions and showing slight peculiarities of manufacture which leave no doubt as to their origin, is sufficient to show that stanniferous faïence was actually made in Paris, at least on a small scale. It is obvious, however, that the painters who had been drawn from the provinces did not depart from the style of design which had originated at Rouen. On all pieces fairly authenticated as Paris work, we see the Rouen "Lambrequins" and "embroidery borders" faithfully reproduced, but they are somewhat inferior in treatment. The same colours are employed in the polychrome patterns, but they lack brilliance, and the scarlet red of the Norman potter is replaced by a dark yellow. To make up for the poorness of the general effect, the details are always outlined with manganese. The above features are noticeable in the curious series of genuine representations of the ware brought together in the Sèvres Museum, one of which is reproduced in this book.

The series comprises jugs, dishes, and particularly capacious bowls used for mixing mulled wine. Each specimen is a unique work, fittingly decorated to please the friend or the regular customer to whom it was presented by the maker. Thus we see the patron saints of the shoemaker painted on a large wine bowl inscribed: "Present fait par Mr. Frapart à Mr. Boulangé, 1709." Upon other pieces we have the emblems of several trades, namely: the gardener's, with the name of "Jacques Gondoin, 1722"; the wine merchant's, "Eme Bourron, 1726"; the surgeon's, "J. B. de la Barre, 1727"; the butcher's, "Gavrre Arnee, 1731." All the above, and many others, are richly decorated in the Rouen style. No mark has ever been found upon any of them, but the names with which they are inscribed, and the word "Paris" which follows in several instances, give them an undeniably local character.



ERRATUM.

The figure facing page 76 should be numbered Fig. 21, *not* Fig. 22.

FRENCH FAÏENCE.

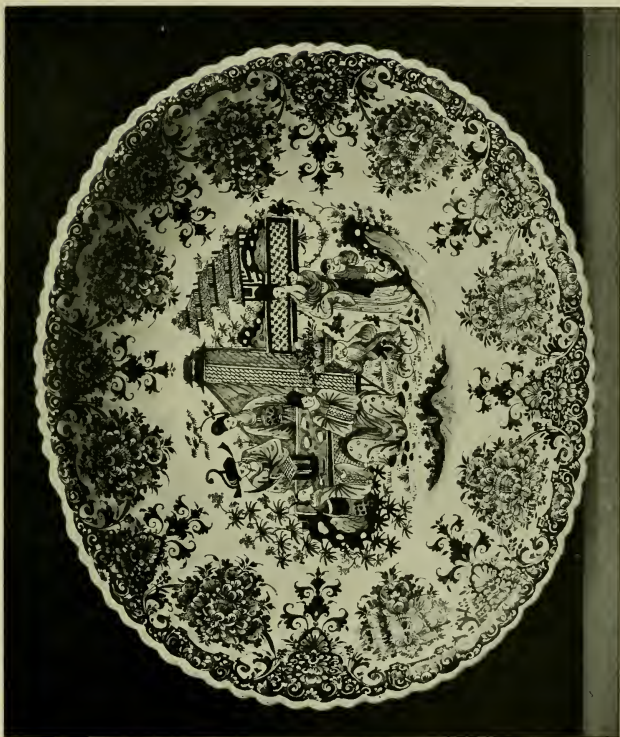


RC
FIG. 22.—DIS
PC
GT

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ROUEN.

FIG. 22.—DISH WITH “EMBROIDERY” BORDER;
POLYCHROME DECORATION.
GUILLIBEAUX.
D. 15 in. (See p. 71.)

Not before 1720 do we find documentary evidence of a faïence manufacturer being at work in the Rue de la Roquette, Faubourg St.-Antoine, a part of the town thenceforth affected towards the carrying on of this new branch of the ceramic industry. His name was François Hebert; he was related to the Chicanneau family, and by this fact the likeness of his products to those of Saint-Cloud and Rouen is easily accounted for. In 1730, Genest, a neighbour of his, in whose works common pottery had been made since 1675, began the manufacture of white faïence. He was succeeded by Jean Binet in 1750. In connection with the affairs of the latter factory, we are made aware of the fact that potters could not yet exercise their trade in full freedom. Genest had to maintain long and costly litigation against the magistrates who, on the strength of an edict of 1723, had ordered his factory to be closed. He only won his case by representing that his predecessors had worked at the trade on the same spot for close on eighty years without interference.

One Digne set up a more important establishment in the same Rue de la Roquette, at about the same period. He enjoyed the patronage of the Duchess of Orleans, daughter of the Regent, who gave him a commission for a set of drug-pots, destined for the pharmacy of the Chelles Convent, of which she was Abbess. The pots were handsomely painted in the Rouen style, and emblazoned with the arms of the d'Orléans family. Odd specimens of the set, now dispersed, have found their way into public and private collections.

A growing demand for faïence stoves greatly assisted the development of the Paris ceramic industry. Elegant models were prepared by the best sculptors; they were produced chiefly in pure white, or with rich gilding in the rococo style to agree with the tasteful schemes of decoration in vogue at that moment. Of these, charming examples are still in existence.

Towards the middle of the eighteenth century stanniferous faïence had grown out of date, and was being supplanted by

imitations of English earthenware, or, as it was called, "Faïence fine." The royal manufactory of "Terre d'Angleterre," or of "The Pont aux Choux," situated in the Rue de Charonne, had been founded by Edme as early as 1748. His cream colour, black basalt, and other kinds of English ware, commanded a great success. The establishment was greatly enlarged by Mignon in 1766. The latter professed to undertake the making of any exceptional and costly pieces that could be ordered from him. Chapelle, who was later on to establish the factory of Sceaux, had been his manager. Ollivier, a stove manufacturer, also tried his hand at imitating, but with little success, all the productions of Josiah Wedgwood, including white and blue jasper. Another competitor in the same class of manufacture was Potter, established in the Rue de Crussol, at a factory styled "The Prince of Wales Works."

E. Garnier has collected a few particulars concerning the faïence of Paris in his "Dictionnaire de la Céramique," Paris, 1894, but no special monograph has yet been written on the subject.

SINCENY.

Another offspring of the prolific Rouen trunk is the faïence made at Sinceny; the relationship is unmistakable; a striking likeness to the ancestor is imprinted upon every feature of the descendant.

Towards 1728 J. B. de Fayard, "Seigneur" of Sinceny, and governor of Chauny, in Picardy, conceived the idea of endowing his province with a new industry, and to that effect he built a small faïence factory under the very walls of his castle. Trials were at first made in a desultory way, but regular production was definitely established in 1733, when Pierre Pellevé, from Rouen, having been engaged as practical manager, came over accompanied by thirty experienced workmen. As was to be expected, they did not produce anything that was in any way different from the ware they had been accustomed to make in the workshops they had just left. They repeated the "radiating"

PLATE XIII.

ROUEN.

Jug: Decoration upon an Enamelled Blue Ground.

H. $7\frac{1}{2}$ in. Diam. 4 in.

(By kind permission of J. H. FITZHENRY, Esq.)





ROUEN.

FIG. 22.—DISH WITH POLYCHROME DECORATION
(ATTRIBUTED TO GUILLIBEAUX).

D. 15 in. (*See p. 71.*)

patterns and the pseudo-Chinese subjects much in fashion at that moment. They showed, however, a marked predilection for grotesque figures of mandarins with flowing robes, disporting themselves among a growth of nondescript flowers, the subject being framed with the extravagant ornamentation accepted as representing the Oriental style. All of it was so closely imitated from the Rouen designs, that were it not for the presence of an occasional S traced in blue, a piece of Sinceny manufacture could hardly be recognised. A yellow of remarkable brilliance, and an opaque red lighter and less glossy than the one employed at Rouen, may sometimes be taken as guides to identification.

Several of the best painters from the Norman factories, among whom Claude Borne must be mentioned first, worked at Sinceny, and, with their assistance, very creditable, if not quite original *faïence* was painted towards 1751.

When the over-glaze decoration, fired up in the reverberating kiln, became so popular, Chambon, who was then director, engaged P. Bertrand and other clever hands from Lorraine to decorate the ware in the newly introduced style. Their work is said to be indistinguishable from the best work made at Strasburg. This last move retarded only by a few years the complete abandonment of *faïence* painting; all that was done after that time was not above the cheapest description of domestic articles in plain white or brown.

It was but lately that the existence of the Sinceny factory was revealed to the collector. He might have preferred to be left in blessed ignorance, for it is rather disappointing to be made aware of the probability that some specimen in our possession, so far believed to be a genuine example of Rouen or Strasburg, may have originated from a place where nothing but counterfeits were made.

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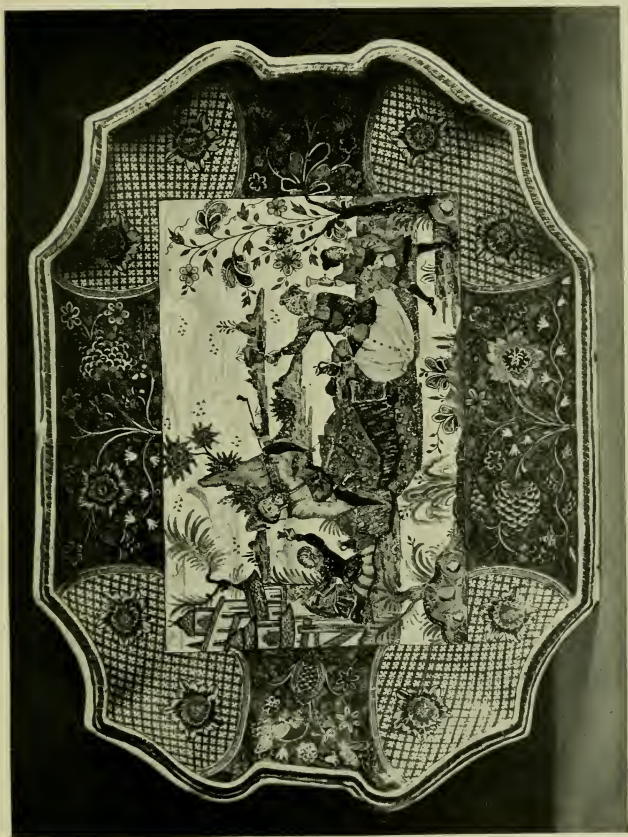
LILLE.

At the request of the civic magistrates, Jacques Febvrier, a modeller from Tournay, and Jean Bossu, a painter from Ghent, established a manufactory of painted faïence in the town of Lille in the year 1696. Notwithstanding this apparently Flemish origin the factory adopted exclusively the current style of production then in favour in Normandy. On that account the faïence of Lille is usually considered as a direct derivation from that of Rouen, and both are consequently classed in the same group. No doubt the leading painters employed by J. Febvrier had been obtained from the chief centre of manufacture which supplied well-trained hands to nearly all the other factories of France.

An often quoted example of the early Lille faïence is the portable altar now in the Sèvres Museum, which bears the following inscription: "Fecit jacobus S. Feburier Insulis in Flandria, anno 1716; and Pinxit Maria Stephanus Borne, anno 1716." The piece is painted in blue in the Rouen style. A still more telling piece of evidence of absolute imitation is afforded by the large armorial dish preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museums. Both pieces are reproduced in this work.

J. Febvrier having died in 1729 in highly prosperous circumstances, he was succeeded by his widow, who took her son-in-law, François Boussemart, into partnership. Under their joint management the concern had increased so much in importance that they deemed themselves warranted in requesting that the title of Royal manufactory should be granted to their works, alleging that they were "the largest establishment of the kind existing in the kingdom."

Boussemart worked until 1778, in which year the factory



ROUEN.

FIG. 23.—PLATEAU : POLYCHROME DECORATION.
GUILBREAUX STYLE.

L. 16 in. (*See p. 71.*)

passed into the hands of Philippe Petit, who maintained the high standard of the manufacture. As had been the case in almost all French factories, the faïence of Lille passed through all the modifications demanded by the evolution of public taste; Moustiers and Strasburg were imitated in turn. The enamel is remarkably white and brilliant, but the colours are dull and weak; the decorative treatment is inferior to the average of the faïence of artistic pretensions; it has none of the boldness and accuracy displayed by the painters of the chief centres.

No mark is found upon the early ware; various combinations of the monogram F.B. distinguish that made by François Boussemart.

We find another connecting link between the factories of Rouen and Lille, in the fact that the soft porcelain invented by Poterat—of which Chicanneau had transported the secret to Saint-Cloud—was also made without any appreciable difference by Barthélemy Dorez, of Lille.

This Barthélemy Dorez was established as a *faïencier* as early as 1711; but no specimen of his faïence has ever been authenticated. The soft porcelain he made in association with his nephew, P. Pelissier, is recognisable by the L or the D with which it is usually marked. He was succeeded by Hereng in 1755; in 1786 the works were in the possession of H. F. Lefebvre.

Minor factories belonging to J. B. Wamps, Maskelier and others have existed in the town.

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VALENCIENNES.

A few words on the factories of Valenciennes are the necessary complement of the foregoing notice of the Lille faïence. The

ware made in both places was identically of the same description, the manufacturers were members of the same family, and had worked together at one time.

We have seen a branch of the Dorez family successfully established at Lille. In 1735 three brothers were conducting in association the works that their father, Jean Baptiste, had founded in 1710. One of them, F. Louis Dorez, dissolved partnership and started a business of his own in the town of Valenciennes. He was thoroughly experienced in the ways and means of manufacture, and he was in receipt of a small subsidy from the town council. Success, however, did not reward his enterprise. At the end of five years he died, leaving his factory in rather bad circumstances. His brother, Claude Dorez, was not more fortunate; he failed and retired in 1748. Of the results of another venture, made by Picart in 1756, we have no particulars. Gaspard Becar comes next on the list with a pottery and faïence factory, which, having commenced with better prospects, came to grief in 1780.

All these ill-fated attempts to endow the town of Valenciennes with a faïence manufactory have, curiously enough, left nothing by which they could be remembered besides a few names and dates. Some ware was made, at least for a time, by each of the short-lived works; but they never went beyond copying the patterns produced at Lille, and discrimination between the copies and the model is now a matter of great difficulty. Many specimens have been attributed to Valenciennes, but none has ever been fully authenticated.

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SAINT-AMAND-LES-EAUX.

Although the small town of Saint-Amand is situated but a short distance from Valenciennes, its faïence manufactory had quite a

PLATE XIV.

ROUEN.

Tray: Polychrome Decoration: Late Period.

L. $25\frac{1}{4}$ in. W. 19 in.





ROUEN.

FIG. 24.—SUGAR SIFTERS : POLYCHROME

DECORATION.

H. 9 in.

distinct origin. The founder, Pierre Joseph Fauquez, came from Tournay where he had acquired some experience of the Flemish and Dutch methods of manufacture. Three generations of Fauquez succeeded each other in the management of the works, and, unlike their neighbours, maintained the business in a flourishing condition, until the revolution of 1793 obliged J. B. Fauquez to emigrate to Germany.

Among the minor factories, Saint-Amand stands in the front rank by reason of the good quality of its ware and the skilful treatment of the decoration. The structure of the pieces is thin and light—a quality which is peculiar to Dutch ware, and which other French *faïenciers* never took much trouble to obtain. The stanniferous enamel is never tinged with blue or green, as at Nevers and at Rouen, but is always pure and white. In the style of decoration we do not find much to recommend it on the score of originality. We must, however, make an exception in the case of the pieces with bluish grounds, on which designs in opaque white enamel are raised after the fashion called by the Italians “SOPRA BIANCO.” Examples of this kind are not uncommon; the style is quite peculiar to Saint-Amand. They are usually marked with crossed FF’s, for Fauquez, but arranged in the way that recalls the L’s of Sèvres. As for the rest of the painted ware, pure imitations intended to be sold as Rouen or Strasburg, we can understand why they never bear any mark.

Faïence-porcelain was painted by A. Gaudry with Watteau subjects. It shows a delicacy of execution which makes it much sought after by collectors. Earthenware, in the English taste as to shapes, but painted in gold and colours in the Strasburg style, was the last production.

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SAINT-DENIS-SUR-SARTHON.

Ceramography is responsible for the publication of more than one volume as insipid as it is uncalled for. It ought to be known by this time that there have been countless pot works in which, for generations, uncouth earthen vessels have been fashioned and baked, just as loaves were being formed and bread baked in the next baker's shop; in both cases with an equal unconsciousness of the possibility of improvement. Yet a local writer who would spurn the idea of compiling the history of the village bakery thinks that he deserves our gratitude for bringing to light the vicissitudes of an obscure and justly forgotten faïence factory.

The existence of the works of Saint-Denis-sur-Sarthon has been revealed to us in a lengthy and showy monograph. A glance at it leaves us under the impression that it was scarcely worth while to print on fine paper, and illustrate with twenty coloured plates of quarto size, incontestable evidence that no more insignificant, not to say ugly, crockery was ever produced anywhere. But such a fine book cannot be ignored, and I feel bound to extract from it the following particulars:—

Jean Ruel de Belleisle, ironmaster at Saint-Denis-sur-Sarthon obtained, in 1749, letters-patent for the manufacture of painted faïence in that region. His manager was a Rouen painter named Pierre Pellevé, formerly director of the Sinceny factory. The patterns which were executed during the five years Pellevé stayed with Jean Ruel, in the much simplified style of Sinceny, are bad enough in their way; but those which were after that time daubed on the ware by the self-taught labourers of the place can be better imagined than described. The works were finally closed in 1861.

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PLATE XV.

SINCENY.

Soup-Tureen in the Rouen Style.

H. 7 in. L. 12 in. W. $9\frac{1}{2}$ in.

(See p. 79.)



PLATE XVI.

LILLE.

Armorial-Dish in the Rouen Style.

D. $9\frac{1}{8}$ in.

(See p. 80 .)





ROUEN.

FIG. 25.—TABLE TOP IN POLYCHROME WITH THE
ROYAL ARMS: ATTRIBUTED TO PIERRE
CHAUPELLE.

L. 36 in. (See p. 69.)



ROUEN.

FIG. 26.—CIDER PITCHER: POLYCHROME
DECORATION. INSCRIBED AND
DATED 1727.
H. 12 in.



ROUEN.

FIG. 27.—PLATES AND SOUP-TUREEN WITH
PATTERN "À LA CORNE."
(See p. 71.)



ROUEN.

FIG. 28.—DISH WITH POLYCHROME PATTERN
"À LA CORNE."



PARIS.

FIG. 29.—SALAD DISH PAINTED IN POLYCHROME.

D. 13 in. (See p. 76.)



LILLE.

FIG. 30.—ALTAR FRONT PAINTED IN BLUE AND
YELLOW : SIGNED “JACOBUS FEBURIER
AND MARIA STEPHANUS BORNE 1716.”
H. 34 in. (*See p. 80.*)



LILLE.

FIG. 31.—JUG WITH POLYCHROME DECORATION
IN THE ROUEN STYLE: DATED 1723.
H. 10 in.

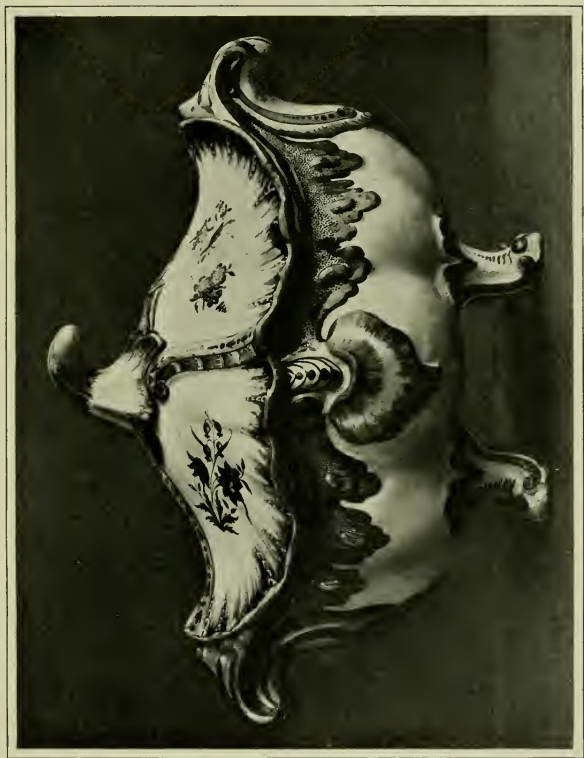


LILLE.

FIG. 32.—TEA-POT BY BOUSSEMARY :

DATED 1768.

(See p. 80.)



LILLE.

FIG. 33.—SOUP-TUREEN : POLYCHROME
DECORATION.
L. 17 in.

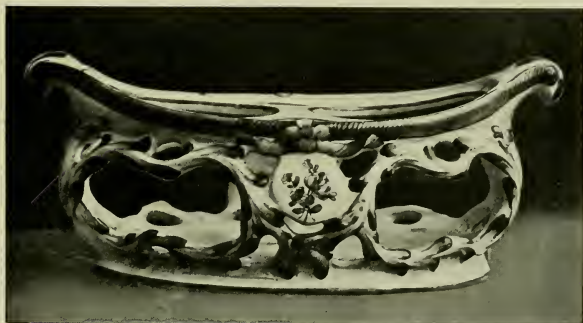


SAINT-AMAND-LES-EAUX.

FIG. 34.—DISH WITH A BOWL ADHERING TO
THE CENTRE : PAINTED IN BLUE.

SIGNED N. A. DOREZ, 1757.

L. 14 in. (*See p. 85.*)



SAINT-AMAND-LES-EAUX.

FIG. 35.—CRUET STAND.

L. 10 in.

VI.

MOUSTIERS.

VARAGES — ARDUS AND MONTAUBAN — APT — BORDEAUX —
CLERMONT-FERRAND — TOULOUSE — MONTPELLIER —
NARBONNE—SAMADET.

MOUSTIERS.

How it came to pass that Moustiers—a small village lost in the mountains of Provence and deprived of all the facilities of communication with the commercial centres—developed one day into an important seat of faïence manufacture is a question that can scarcely be answered by an application of the usual causes which govern industrial prosperity. Yet history tells us that Moustiers has occupied in the sunny south—with respect to the ceramic industry—a position equivalent to that which was held by Nevers and Rouen in Central and Northern France. For long it remained a generative focus, dispensing life and energy to a host of minor factories which branched off from it in every direction.

To Pierre Cléricy, or Clérissy, belongs the credit of having established, towards 1679—and not 1686, as has been stated by previous historians—the first faïence manufactory. A member of the family, Antoine Cléricy, is known to have been potter to the king at Fontainebleau, in 1612. The enviable position that the latter had attained in the trade may have induced his descendant to follow in his steps, and become himself a potter. Local historians do not hesitate to ascribe to P. Clérissy the discovery of all the secrets of the Moustiers manufactory. One might trace the origin of his technical experience to the intercourse he may have had in his youth with one Jean Clérissy, also a native of Moustiers, who was at the time Curé of Paimbœuf, in the diocese of Rouen. If that be the case we have reason to suspect that the manufacturing processes practised at Rouen were the source from which those

introduced at Moustiers by Pierre Clérissy, first of the name, had been originally obtained. It must also be mentioned that one A. Clérissy had a factory at Marseilles, where he made ornamental faïence in the style of the Savona potters.

The early Moustiers ware shows a tendency to rival the late Italian majolica. We notice, however, that while most ambitious figure subjects, copied from the engravings of Franz Floris and Antonio Tempesta, occupy the centre of the piece, the ornamental borders affect an undisguised reminiscence of the Rouen "lambrequins" and "lace" patterns. In these no indication of the characteristic style that was, later on, to distinguish the Moustiers faïence can be detected. A large dish in the Borely Museum at Marseilles, representing the Good Samaritan, and inscribed: "G. VIRY F^{ic} À MOUSTIERS CHEZ CLERISSY, 1711," and other equally remarkable specimens painted with hunting scenes or religious and mythological subjects, preserved in various collections, give us a fair notion of the artistic merit and composite style of the ware made at that period.

The master died in 1728, leaving his growing factory in the hands of his nephew, Pierre Clérissy II., under whose care its importance greatly increased. He was assisted by a staff of talented painters; the names of Gaspard and T. B. Viry, Solomé, Ferraud, Fauchier, Baron, Pol and Hyacinthe Rouse, Pelloquin, and Joseph Fouque (who was to become his partner), occur upon the ware. A definite and unprecedented style of decoration was then established. As it was strictly adhered to by all the decorators, we may assume that its adoption was not due to the commanding influence of one of the artists, but rather to the personal taste of the manufacturer. The designs are, in the earliest and best examples, traced in light blue with great firmness and delicacy. They are composed of graceful scrolls and garlands, hanging canopies and elegant pedestals, enlivened with flying cupids and figures of nymphs and satyrs; in short, the wealth of ornamental motives that could be extracted from the engravings of Berain, J. Marot, and Bernard Toro, were almost exclusively put under

PLATE XVII.

MOUSTIERS.

Plateau with Hunting Scene.

(By A. CLÉRISSY.)

D. $22\frac{1}{2}$ in.

(See p. 88.)





MOUSTIERS.

FIG. 36.—FOUNTAIN WITH POLYCHROME
DECORATION : MARKED G. ROS.
(See p. 88.)

contribution. Polychrome patterns made their appearance at a later date.

These neat and slender traceries, which contrasted with the rather heavy mode of ornamentation adopted in other manufacturing centres, gave to the Moustiers faïence an attractive look of its own, and contributed largely to its success. It possessed an additional recommendation in the quality of its stanniferous enamel, which surpassed all others in depth and brilliance. It must be recollected that those were the halcyon days of faïence making; the gaily-painted ware was the rage of the moment, the production could not cope with the demand. So Pierre Clérissy II., in spite of the out-of-the-way situation of his works, managed to send his ware all over France, Spain, and Italy, and was steadily amassing a fortune. He contributed largely to the supply of the armorial dinner services, which a fashion arising from social events had rendered indispensable requisites in the palaces of the nobility and the dwellings of the wealthy. Specimens are still in existence of the one ordered by the Marshal de Richelieu in 1734, and of another executed for Madame de Pompadour in 1745, at the cost of one thousand livres. Here a slight historical rectification must find its place. It is recorded, in all that has been written about Moustiers, that P. Clérissy was created a Baron by Louis XIV., as a reward for his successful career as a manufacturer. As a matter of fact, having purchased the baronial estate of Trévans, Clérissy also bought, in hard cash, the office of secretary of the King to the Parliament of Provence, an office to which a patent of nobility was attached, and he was thenceforth entitled to style himself Baron of Trévans.

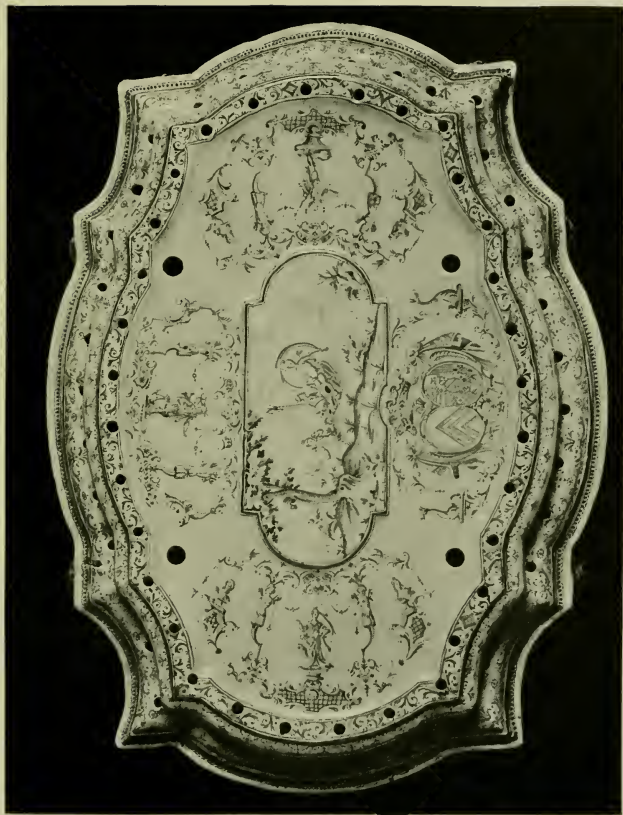
He retired from business towards 1748; his partner, the painter Joseph Fouque, succeeded him as proprietor of the works. Gaspard Fouque, son of the latter, was the last manufacturer of painted faïence; after him, the making of common ware lingered in the place until 1852.

No fewer than fourteen faïence works flourished in the town

at one time. Those of Olerys and Laugiers created a strong competition with those of the Clérissys and Fouques.

Olerys had come from Marseilles, and began work as a faïence painter in the employment of Pierre Clérissy. The Moustiers ware was, at that moment, so highly appreciated in Spain, whither it was largely exported, that the Prime Minister, the Count of Aranda, commissioned a special agent to offer a remunerative engagement to any experienced workman capable of undertaking the establishment of a similar kind of manufacture. Olerys accepted the conditions that were offered to him, and he repaired to Alcora to instruct in the new ways the Spanish potters who had long been at the work in that locality. He supplied them with designs in his favourite Toro style, and the ware they made under his direction became an exact duplication of the Moustiers faïence. From the Spaniards he learned the composition of various colours which had been seldom, if ever, employed by his master Clérissy. On his return to Moustiers he entered into partnership with his brother-in-law, Laugiers, and in 1738 they started a factory in which special attention was given to the production of polychrome patterns. Their works stood at the "Pourtau Deis Oulo," or gate of the potteries; a name which by-the-bye, implies that common potters had long been settled on the spot.

To Olerys are due the elaborate pieces on which we see medallions crowded with minute figures, and engarlanded with wreaths of small flowers. The subjects, usually traced in blue, are coloured with light and dark yellow, a faint purple, and a pale green, obtained by a mixture of blue and yellow. Occasionally touches of an opaque red, very inferior to the red employed at Rouen, are sparingly introduced. In these polychrome specimens the painting is executed with great delicacy upon a white glaze as remarkable as ever for its gloss and limpidity. Nevertheless, owing to the want of power of the colours at the disposal of the painter, the general effect is decidedly weak and dull.



MOUSTIERS.

FIG. 37.—CENTRE STAND DECORATED IN BLUE:
ARMS OF MARCÉCHAL DE RICHELIEU.
L. 21½ in. (See p. 89.)

To the same master is also ascribed the introduction of the grotesque style. The dishes and jugs, studded all over the groundwork with comical personages and nondescript creatures, borrowed from the caricatures of J. Callot, or born out of the frolicsome imagination of some local artist, appear to have had a long run of success. They are generally painted in camaïeu, either purple, green, or dark yellow; they coincide with the decline of faïence painting.

The partnership between Olerys and Laugiers was dissolved in 1749; from that year Olerys, unable to start again in business, worked as a painter for the chief manufacturers up to 1783, the date of his death. His mark was an O crossed with an L. As the ware he marked in that way covers a rather long period, it comprises specimens of very unequal value, some being of the highest order, many others of the most coarse and vulgar description. The forgers have never omitted to affix Olerys' mark on the spurious Moustiers faïence with which they have inundated the curiosity market. Fortunately they have never been able to imitate the particular excellence of the stanniferous glaze, which remains a safe warrant of genuineness.

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VARAGES.

As the town of Moustiers was getting overcrowded with faïence factories, some enterprising potters opened new workshops in the neighbouring village of Varages. Among the names

of the settlers we find that of one Clérissy. They started a sharp competition against the original centre by imitating the most successful patterns, and selling their products at a much cheaper rate. In the second half of the eighteenth century, eight independent factories were in full working order, all making common Moustiers faïence for a lower class of trade.

Although large pieces of *apparat* were never attempted, costly table services were sometimes executed. Attributed to Varages are some exceptionally fine pieces, painted in polychrome, by an anonymous artist, with groups of diminutive figures standing before a complicated background of landscape and architectural monuments. A plate of the kind, evidently one of a set, is reproduced in the sale catalogue of the A. Léon collection, Bordeaux, 1896. It is inscribed: "MONSIEUR LE CHEVALIER BARREAU." The celebrated Robert, of Marseilles, never made anything more exquisitely finished.

Tavernes, situated in the same region, was also making the same kind of ware up to 1760.

The ware was left unmarked. A cross traced in blue was formerly believed to have been used at Varages; it has since been ascertained that the blue cross is common to many faïence works of the South.

ARDUS AND MONTAUBAN.

It is admitted that a modern forgery is a disgrace to a ceramic collection, but any tolerable imitation of a typical style of manufacture which can boast an ancient pedigree is not only tolerated, but regarded with indulgent appreciation. The painted faïence produced at Arduş and Montauban might be branded with the name of "shams," so easy is it to mistake it for the work of the Moustiers factories. The blue traceries with which it is adorned may be pencilled with less boldness and delicacy; the opaque enamel may not be quite so white and glossy, yet these copies differ very little from the originals,

PLATE XVIII.

MOUSTIERS.

Shaving Dish in the Oléry's' Style.

L. 15 in. W. $11\frac{5}{8}$ in.

(See p. 90.)





MOUSTIERS.

FIG. 38.—MODEL OF A STATE CARRAIGE,
 DECORATED IN BLUE : WITH
 THE ARMS OF THE "DAUPHIN"

(LOUIS XV.).

H. $7\frac{1}{2}$ in.

and a collector is often satisfied to take a good specimen of Ardus as a substitute for one of Moustiers.

The *faïencerie* of Ardus, situated three miles from Montauban, on the banks of the Aveyron, is said to have been founded by Baron de Lamothe towards 1736. It had been granted the title of Royal factory—a title which carried with it the privilege of placing the King's arms over the gates of the works, and of dressing the hall porter in the royal livery. Several specimens finely decorated in a style which denotes the hand of a Moustiers painter are inscribed: "Ardus, 1739."

In 1746 the factory was under the management of a woman, Louise Ruelle, a clever *faïence* painter who has signed some of her work; she took a partner named Delmas, and after a few years' work in association with him she retired, having realised a small fortune. Mathieu Rigal was the head painter; some plates with portraits signed and dated by him are not without artistic merit. Under the partnership of Lapierre and Lestrade, 1752—1761, polychrome patterns in the fashion of Rouen were produced; the pharmacy of the hospital of Montauban has a set of pots and jars of that period. Common pottery continued to be made at Ardus until 1874.

Lestrade and Lapierre, having separated, left Ardus for Montauban, in which town they introduced the *faïence* industry in 1761 and 1770 respectively. Their example was followed by other potters, and at one time eight factories were competing against each other in the place. At Auvillar, a neighbouring locality, the trade developed still greater proportions, twelve *faïence* works giving employment to a great number of workmen. It is needless to say that their productions, although painted in imitation of the best style of the period, were of a very cheap and vulgar description, and that they offer little of artistic interest to the collector.

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APT.

César Moulin had long been established at Apt when Joseph Fouque married his daughter and joined him in the management of the factory, in 1789. Joseph was brother to Gaspard Fouque, the successor of Clérissy. Although the traditions of Moustiers were never followed at Apt, the relationship which united the masters created a natural connection between the two places, and warrant us in ranging both in the same group.

Yellow earthenware, and a kind of "agate ware" obtained by a skilful marbling of red and yellow clays, richly glazed with lead-ore, were the staple articles of manufacture. The ware proceeded obviously from the English importations, the lightness and finish of which was also attempted. Many fine examples of the Apt marbled ware are preserved in the ceramic collections. The forms, inspired from the work of the silversmith, retain the grace and elegance of the Louis XV. style. The foliage, flowers, and other details in high relief appended to the handles, spouts, and covers of the pieces, are modelled by hand with no mean taste and ability. Out of the same marbled clay was formed the body of vases, basins and fountains of large dimensions; the surface being afterwards adorned by the application of figures, masks, and garlands, in white clay, of good design and elaborate workmanship.

A ware of the same kind and of equal excellence was made in the next village of Castellet by César Moulin, the younger.

In 1802 the Apt factory was in the possession of the widow Arnoux; some marbled plates in the Sèvres Museum bear that date accompanied with the mark W.A.

It may be of some interest to know that Léon Arnoux, for fifty years director of Minton's works, was, through his mother



MOUSTIERS.

FIG. 39.—HELMET-SHAPED EWER, DECORATED
IN BLUE.

H. 10 in.

and grandmother, the direct descendant of the Fouques and the Moulins.

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BORDEAUX.

It is needless to say that of the sum total of ancient faïence showing the Berain and Toro designs, so suggestive of a Moustiers origin, only a small portion can have been made in that place. When the style was most in fashion, the Bordeaux factory adopted it readily, and now its unmarked and ill-characterised productions are naturally placed to the credit of the Provençal potters. Bordeaux had, however, some importance as a manufacturing centre. According to the "Almanach du Commerce" for 1779, about twenty faïence works were, at that time, busy in the town or the immediate neighbourhood. That some of them could produce a ware much above the ordinary domestic requirements, is amply testified by some ornamental examples in the possession of local collectors, the genuineness of which stands beyond doubt. Yet, barring these few exceptions, the Bordeaux faïence seems to have completely disappeared.

In 1711, there was in the city a penurious potter, named J. Fautier, who possessed a fair practical knowledge of faïence making; and there was also a well-to-do merchant of the name of Hustin, who lived in the enjoyment of a superabundance of cash. An association was formed between capital and talent. The consequence is easily conjectured. In 1714 we find that Hustin had come out as a notable manufacturer, protected by a privilege by which the sole right of making and selling painted faïence in the whole district was secured to him for a period of 15 years. Of Fautier, nothing more was ever to be heard.

Started under the patronage of the richest inhabitants of a wealthy province, and depending upon a large export

trade for which Bordeaux offered special facilities, an establishment of this kind was bound to secure success. Hustin died in 1749, bequeathing to his son a business in a most prosperous state, and a large fortune that his profits as a pottery manufacturer had greatly increased.

Moustiers having supplied the greater number of trained painters, we cannot be surprised to find among the products of Hustin's factory a large preponderance of Moustiers patterns. The ornate table ware made for the monasteries of the Carmelites and Carthusians of Bordeaux and Toulouse—the emblazoned and inscribed specimens of which are now dispersed into private collections—might be taken for Moustiers faïence were it not that the glaze is somewhat lacking in brilliance. A few of the workmen had come from Nevers and Rouen, and they repeated the stock designs of those two centres. The influence of Nevers is particularly manifest in some vases of extraordinary dimensions, several of which are still in existence. Great technical ability was displayed in the potting of these huge pieces, much in demand at the time for the embellishment of gardens and for architectural purposes; some of them stand from three to four feet high. A curious example of the application of faïence to the adornment of public buildings is still to be seen inserted in the pediment of the Bordeaux Exchange Hall. It is a white clock dial, painted in blue, composed of six separate sections forming together a circle fifteen feet in diameter. The inscription it bears tells us that it was made, in 1750, by one E.R., at the royal factory of F. Hustin.

Ferdinand Hustin, the son of Jacques, who succeeded his father in 1749, is responsible for these exceptional pieces. He lived until 1770; after which the works passed into the possession of Moneau, a painter who has signed with his name a few interesting specimens.

The French Revolution brought the death-blow to the industry of painted faïence at Bordeaux; the efforts made to

PLATE XIX.

MOUSTIERS.

Dish with Grotesque Figures.

L $16\frac{5}{8}$ in. W. $12\frac{1}{2}$ in.

(See p. 91.)





MOUSTIERS.

FIG. 40.—DISH DECORATED IN BLUE.
D. 20½ in.

revive it remained without effect. But the manufacture of English earthenware, introduced by D. Johnson towards 1830, and continued by Viellard, met with a decided and long-maintained success.

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CLERMONT-FERRAND.

In the lengthy train of cognate productions which Moustiers proudly heads like a lord, the rest follow, like tardy varlets parading in the cast-off finery of the master. Clermont-Ferrand was one of the least successful imitators of the Provençal ware; the designs were borrowed from the same source, viz., the engravings of Berain and Toro; but the likeness did not go any further; they were heavily painted upon a white enamel of very inferior quality.

Two workmen from Nevers first made an attempt at making and painting faïence ware at Clermont in 1730. Such specimens as may be attributed to them are badly twisted and crazed, and denote a very imperfect manufacture. Their enterprise soon came to an end.

Jouvenceau d'Alagnat made a better start in 1733; he erected a suitable building for his factory, engaged a batch of experienced operatives from Montpellier, and entrusted the management of the business to one A. Savignac. A curious statement of the expenses, which amounted annually to 25,000 livres, gives us an insight into the wages paid, at the time, to the men employed in the industry. The director, Savignac, received 1,100 livres; the painters earned from 400 to 500 livres; the turners 700 livres; only one presser, a woman, was required; she got 120 livres a year. In the application made for the grant of a privilege by d'Alagnat, in 1735, the ware is said to be made "in the manner of Montpellier and Moustiers, with the

advantage over the products of these manufactories, that it never cracks or crazes in hot water." This, by-the-bye, is rather, an unwarranted pretension, for all the authenticated pieces of Clermont manufacture are conspicuous by their exceptional crazing. Among the specimens recorded as being inscribed with the mark CLERMONT-FERRAND, may be mentioned: two ewers of helmet shape, dated 1734 and 1736; a jug bearing the inscription: "CONVALESCENCE DE MR. ROSSIGNOL, INTENDANT D'AUVERGNE, 1738"; all decorated in the Moustiers style; and a bottle painted with a comical subject in the Nevers manner, with the date 1740. D'Alagnat was succeeded by his widow, and the concern came to an end in 1743.

Faïence manufacture was resumed in the town in 1774 by a company, with D. Verdier as director. The venture lasted only about ten years. Pierre Lauche conducted another factory at the time of the Revolution, in which "patriotic faïence" was extensively produced. Some of his best pieces bear the monogram P.L.

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TOULOUSE.

Several specimens are known which are inscribed with the name of Toulouse; one of them is signed by the maker: "Laurens Basso, à Toulouza, 1756." They are painted in the style of Moustiers. Of the existence of a faïence factory at that time there is, however, no authentic record. With the pottery works established during the first part of the nineteenth century we have no concern here.



APT.

FIG. 41.—EWER AND BASIN IN MARBLED CLAYS.
BY MOULIN.
H. 14 in.

MONTPELLIER.

The little we know about the Montpellier faïence works shows that it was closely related to Moustiers and Marseilles. Olivier, the first manufacturer said to have been established in the town, petitioned in 1717 to obtain the exclusive right to sell painted faïence in the region; a favour which was not granted. From the fact that the title of Royal manufactory was conferred upon his works in 1729, we may infer that they were of some importance. It is not probable, however, that he produced anything better than articles of common use. Not one piece of Olivier manufacture has ever been authenticated. The same may be said of the ware of his successor, André Philippe; no specimen of it can be safely discriminated from the faïence of Marseilles, which he is known to have imitated. In the absence of any mark or inscription the case is absolutely hopeless.

NARBONNE.

In the Franks collection, in the British Museum, is a small dish painted with metallic lustre attributed to Narbonne. Davillier has traced the existence in that town of a factory founded by the Moors in the sixteenth century. Metallic lustre was not made in France at any other place, and we scarcely need say that examples of the Narbonne ware are not commonly met with. The one just referred to is of extreme rarity and great historical interest.

SAMADET.

A glance at the topography of faïence manufacture during the eighteenth century discloses that there was not one region in the whole kingdom of France which did not possess its own centre of production. The taste for gaudily-painted vessels had spread even among the poorer classes. The fancy ware might

be modest enough, but the colours had to be gay and pleasant to the eye, and the subjects calculated to attract attention. The South-East was amply supplied by the factories of Moustiers, Marseilles, and their branches. Samadet, Giroussens, and Auch provided with cheap faïence the poorer provinces of the South-West.

I do not remember ever to have seen in general collections a single remarkable specimen labelled Samadet; but there are local collectors who may resent my describing it as "cheap faïence," for they will confidently assert that many of the genuine examples in their possession are as fine as the best Moustiers.

The small village of Samadet stands in the less unfertile portion of the barren Department of the Landes. A faïence factory was established in the place by Abbé Maurice de Roquépine, a younger son of the marquis of that name. What were the circumstances which induced an ecclesiastical dignitary to meddle with faïence-making and build the works on his estates has never been ascertained. The success of his enterprise shows, however, that he had good business capacities. In 1732 Abbé de Roquépine obtained letters-patent conferring upon his establishment the usual privileges for twenty years, together with the title of Royal manufactory. During the course of this privilege, affairs had been sufficiently prosperous to warrant an application for a renewal. The conditions of manufacture reached their highest level at that moment. A variety of articles, such as jugs, tureens, cruet-stands, perforated baskets, fountains, and basins, were steadily produced for the regular trade. They were all decorated in a commonplace manner. A limited stock of tracings or "poncifs" was used by the painters; the same subjects doing duty on all possible pieces. The presence of certain bouquets of flowers is so frequent that it suffices to certify the origin of the specimen. Coarse reproductions of the caricature figures of Callot were not forgotten. As at Moustiers, they were painted in green or yellow camaïeu. Remnants of armorial services known to have been made at Samadet have



LA ROCHELLE.

FIG. 42.—JARDINIÈRE IN THE STRASBURG STYLE.
L. 7 in. (See p. 121.)



BORDEAUX.

FIG. 43.—COOLING CISTERN IN POLYCHROME:
WITH THE ARMS OF F. ESCOUBLEAU
DE SOURDIS, ARCHBISHOP, AND OF
ANTOINE DE GASCO, PRESIDENT OF
THE PARLIAMENT OF BORDEAUX.
INSCRIBED: CARTUS BURDIG.
H. 10 in. (See p. 96.)

been picked up by the collector. But the presentation piece, the humble *chef d'œuvre*, in the elaboration of which a skilful craftsman has tried to surpass himself, and which is of so much interest in connection with the history of ancient faïence, is altogether wanting.

Louis d'Astorg, Comte de Brabazan, inherited the factory from his uncle Abbé de Roquépine in 1774. But the leading spirit was gone; under the management of the ordinary foreman who took charge of the works, the making of painted articles was gradually given up; when they were closed in 1832, nothing had been manufactured for many years but the lowest description of village crockery.

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CLERMONT-FERRAND.

FIG. 44.—JUG INSCRIBED AND DATED 1738.
H. 9 in.

VII.

STRASBURG.

NIDERVILLER—LUNÉVILLE AND SAINT-CLEMENT—BELLEVUE *near*
TOUL—MARSEILLES—LA ROCHELLE—SCEAUX—APREY.

STRASBURG.

NEITHER the constitutive material of a faïence piece, nor the form that it affects, can be taken, as a rule, as affording a sure indication of its date and origin. But let it be completed with a surface decoration, and we are at once enabled to form a correct estimate of the place, and even the period, to which the piece is likely to belong. Thus, a plain pot of Strasburg white faïence may be similar in all points to many a white pot manufactured in any country; on the other hand, if it is decorated with reliefs or paintings in the style known to have originated in that place, the same article can no longer be confounded with anything that has been produced elsewhere. For this we may give credit to the Strasburg potter; his painted ware was a bold departure from the established taste, and the collector may now recognise the work that can be attributed to him, or to his school, without hesitation.

From very early times common pottery was made in and around the capital of Alsace. The making of the ornamental earthenware stoves, which formed a necessary appurtenance of all German households ever since the fifteenth century, in itself caused a good number of experienced and talented potters to be permanently occupied in the town. To this ready supply of well-trained hands, Carl Francis Hannong owed the means of establishing, with some facility, a manufactory of tobacco pipes and earthenware stoves, when he arrived from Mayence in 1709. A few years of active and honest exertion developed the enterprise into a large concern. Hannong's character and abilities were so highly considered that in 1718 he was elected a master of the united Corporation of the Builders and Potters, and a few years afterwards made a member of the Lower Senate.

It is not probable that Hannong manufactured any faïence with stanniferous enamel before 1721. In that year he entered into an agreement with one Wackenfelf, who had acquired some experience in a German factory, and who undertook to begin operations at once. The manufacture of tobacco-pipes was given up altogether, and replaced by that of white faïence. Wackenfelf was a deserter from Meissen, and he pretended to have learned there the whole secret of porcelain making. On that representation he had obtained, two years previously, pecuniary assistance from the civic magistrates to build an oven and conduct preliminary experiments on the clays of the district; but the experiments remained fruitless so far, at least, as porcelain was concerned. The town refused to maintain the subsidy. At this juncture, Hannong, who had been able to judge of the man's capabilities, engaged him, not as a porcelain but as a faïence maker. They worked only for one year in association, but at the end of that time, Wackenfelf having been dismissed, the manufacture of faïence was firmly established, and the works in full activity. Most of the painters employed by Hannong had come from the faïence factory of Höchst, then conducted by Gelz with great success.

The Strasburg premises soon proved insufficient to cope with the constant increase of business; another factory was started in 1724 at Haguenau, where excellent clays and sand could be obtained on the spot. Faïence of the same description was made in both places; but the few specimens of Haguenau ware that have been identified do not give one a very high opinion of its quality. The glaze is full of specks and minute holes, thin, and of a greyish tint. The decoration consists chiefly in stiff and ungainly flowers painted in blue under the glaze. A few pieces are marked with two crossed tobacco-pipes, as a recollection of the original trade carried on in the place.

Carl Francis Hannong, unable to bear any longer the burden of two busy factories, disposed of them, in 1732, in favour of his two sons, Paul-Antoine and Balthasar, against an annuity to be

PLATE XX.

STRASBURG.

Clock and Stand.

(By PAUL HANNONG.)

Total height, 3 ft. 9 in. W. $18\frac{1}{2}$ in.

(*See p. 108.*)



paid to him till the end of his life. He died in 1739, in his seventieth year.

The two factories were at first conducted as a joint concern. In 1737, however, the brothers separated; Paul-Antoine taking the Strasburg factory as his share, and Balthasar that of Haguenau.

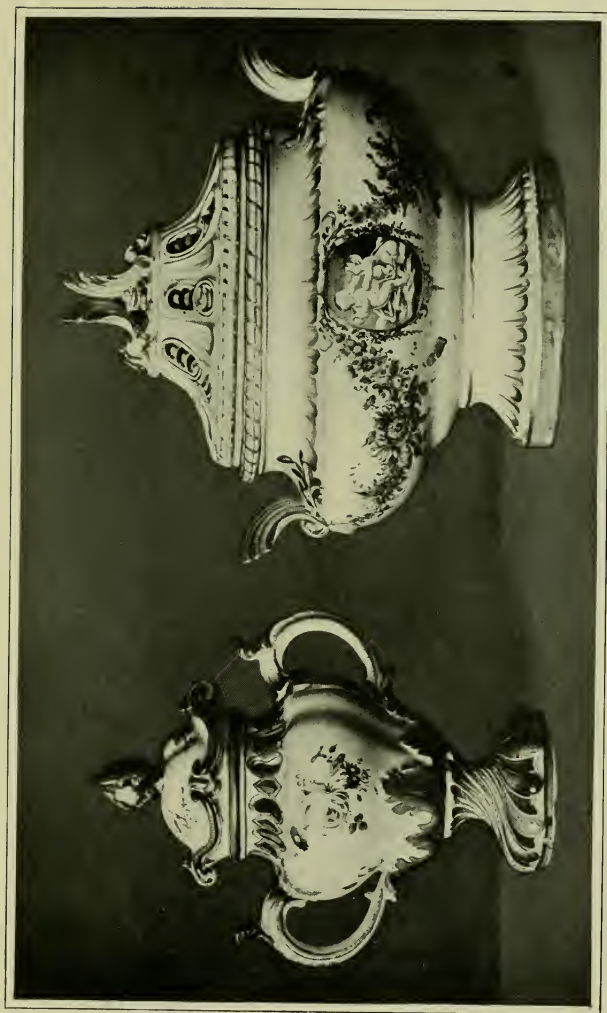
Paul Hannong brought the Strasburg manufacture to the highest degree of excellence it was ever to reach. Fully conversant with the practical part of the trade, and gifted with great artistic taste, he was, moreover, a business man of prodigious activity. He filled all the public functions that his father had occupied; his works were considerably enlarged, and he added to them a special factory of faïence stoves; he brought to a successful end the researches that his father had vainly prosecuted for the manufacture of true porcelain; lastly, the town council, having reduced the regulation size of the roofing tiles employed by the builders, he obtained a monopoly for their manufacture and supply.

It is, however, on the score of the improvements he introduced in the art of faïence painting that Paul Hannong has his place marked in ceramic history. His ware, which usually bears the mark P.H., is remarkable for its uncommon lightness of substance and neatness of treatment. The glaze is smooth, shiny, and milky white. By painting the decoration over the glaze, and firing it in a "Réverbère" kiln, he was enabled to make use of the purples and pinks, and of many other brilliant colours not available under the old system. The transparent enamels could reach the point of vitrification upon the surface without running into each other, and the black outline with which the subjects were traced preserved the sharpness of a pen-stroke. The application of gilding upon faïence was practised by him for the first time. When King Louis XV. visited the town of Strasburg, in 1744, Hannong obtained permission to present to his Majesty a selection of his products, and especially of his newly-invented gilt faïence.

The variety of goods manufactured at that moment was considerable; it comprised richly ornamented articles as well as current domestic ware. A new fashion of faïence stoves, modelled by talented sculptors in the rococo taste, and gracefully decorated with overglaze painting of flowers and trophies, had replaced the embossed panels, glazed in green or brown, used in their construction since the time of the Renaissance. Some of these huge but elegant stoves, still preserved in the "schlosses" of the province, are masterpieces of the ceramic art. Timepieces and brackets of large dimensions, elaborately completed with gold and colour decoration, were produced at the same period.

Gradually the Strasburg faïence was assuming a closer likeness to German porcelain, at least in its outward appearance; the substitution of the Meissen patterns for any other mode of decoration was fully accomplished towards 1748. In the Dresden museum may be seen some remarkable specimens of the armorial services painted in that style at a great cost, for the nobility of France and Germany.

With the establishment of porcelain manufacture at Strasburg this account has little concern, beyond relating how it happened that Hannong's success in that direction gave rise to ruinous litigations, which put an end to his career as a faïence manufacturer. Years had been spent, from the days of his father, in trying to improve an artificial paste, combining a vitreous grit with the white clay of Oberzell, a compound which had never given a satisfactory result. At last, in 1750, Hannong secured the services of two potters and painters from Meissen named Löwenfinck and G. J. Roth, and also, it is said, of the famous Ringler, the very man who had taken a leading part in the foundation of the Vienna and Höchst manufactories. With the united assistance of these thoroughly practical and long-experienced men the manufacture of a true porcelain, as fine as any made in Germany, was from that moment firmly established and successfully carried on in the spacious building just erected for that purpose.



STRASBURG.

FIG. 45.—POT POURRI VASE: BY PAUL
HANNONG.
H. 10 in.

SCEAUX.

FIG. 46.—VASE WITH MEDALLIONS IN
"GRISAILLE"; MARK O. P.
H. 10½ in. (See p. 124.)

So rapid had been the rise and extension of the enterprise, so widespread was the sale of the products, that two years had scarcely elapsed when the royal manufactory of Vincennes became alarmed at the consequences that would ensue if such a dangerous competition was suffered to exist. Protected by royal letters-patent, which secured to them the monopoly of making porcelain in the whole kingdom, the directors of Vincennes denounced the Strasburg factory as a flagrant infringement of their privilege. In vain Paul Hannong repaired to Paris and tried to ward off this terrible blow. All efforts were unavailing; a decree was obtained against him in 1754, which not only interdicted all further manufacture of porcelain in the place, but ordered, besides, that the ovens should be destroyed within a fortnight.

The practical experience that Hannong had acquired during the few years that his porcelain works had been in operation was not to be fruitless. Without loss of time he left Strasburg for Frankenthal in the Palatinate, and there, under the countenance and financial support of the Elector, Charles-Théodore, he established in 1755 a manufactory which took rank almost immediately among the most important in the Empire.

At the death of Paul-Antoine Hannong, which occurred in 1760, his second son, Pierre-Antoine, entered into possession of the two factories of Strasburg and Haguenau, much neglected during the troubled times the old master had had to go through. Pierre Hannong had not inherited his father's energy and business capabilities. Feeling himself unequal to the task of struggling against pressing embarrassments, he entrusted the management of both his establishments to the care of Löwenfinck's widow. Finally he sold all his interest in the concern to his elder brother, Joseph-Adam, who had just retired from Frankenthal.

In 1766 we find Pierre Hannong settled at Vincennes, and starting a factory, where, under the pretence of making faïence after the Strasburg manner, he was stealthily producing common

porcelain. The attempt came to an end after four years of abortive trials. Once more he resumed the manufacture of porcelain in the Rue Saint-Denis at Paris, in 1773; but his partner, dissatisfied with his management, soon obliged him to relinquish all connection with the enterprise. After his departure, the factory, conducted under the patronage of the Comte D'Artois, entered on a short period of brilliant prosperity. The last we hear of Pierre Hannong is his appointment by the revolutionary government of 1793 to the post of Director of the National Manufactory of Sèvres. It does not appear, however, that he actually assumed that office, and he died in the same year.

In the hands of Joseph-Adam Hannong the Alsatian faïence factories had regained something of their former activity under somewhat altered conditions. Excellence of manufacture had then made way for cheapness of cost and an increase of production. But troubles were forthcoming with which the manufacturer found himself powerless to contend. Strasburg, a free town before its annexation to France, was in some respects reputed to stand in a foreign country. The royal farmers of customs duties, disregarding long established covenants, thought it expedient to raise the taxes, theretofore charged upon the goods introduced into France, to such a high scale that international trade was threatened with complete extinction. While Hannong, in concert with the other potters of the northern provinces, was moving heaven and earth to obtain the repeal of these inequitable taxes, his financial situation was going from bad to worse. Business was at a standstill; he was manufacturing at a loss, depending on the influence and support of his patrons, the Princes de Rohan, to tide over the passing difficulties, and confident of being soon able to retrieve his fortunes. But the farmers could not be made to yield one jot of their pretensions. Cardinal Constantin de Rohan, who had most liberally assisted Hannong in his predicament, died in 1779. His heirs claimed payment of the heavy sums the manu-

PLATE XXI.

STRASBURG.

Plate Painted in the Dresden Style.

D. 11 in.

(See p. 108.)'





STRASBURG.

FIG. 47.—JARDINIÈRE.
L. 8 in.

facturer had borrowed at frequent intervals from the treasury of the Strasburg bishopric. Unable to satisfy the demand, the debtor was thrown into a military prison, where he remained in confinement for a whole year. When released Joseph Hannong made superhuman efforts to resume business and repay his creditors. But it was too late; he could obtain no assistance from his fellow townsmen, who had lost all confidence in him. He fell into bankruptcy, and his factories were sold with all their contents in spite of his protestations. The numerous and lengthy memoirs addressed to the Government, to the King, and to the Cardinal Louis de Rohan, in which he exposed his grievances, and copies of which were scattered broadcast, are of immense interest for the light they throw upon the conditions under which the ceramic industry was carried on at the end of the eighteenth century.

The Strasburg works were never re-opened. Pierre Hannong, who had purchased the plant and models, transported them to Haguenau, where he worked, in association with one X. Hallez, until 1786. His brother Joseph returned to Paris, and subsequently settled in Munich. He died in 1800.

So numerous was the Hannong family that confusion is apt to arise when dealing with some of its members. Paul Hannong alone had fifteen children, all of them connected more or less closely with the pottery trade of the North of Europe. The last representative of the name was buried at Haguenau in 1889. Up to the last day of his life he was busy painting faïence plates.

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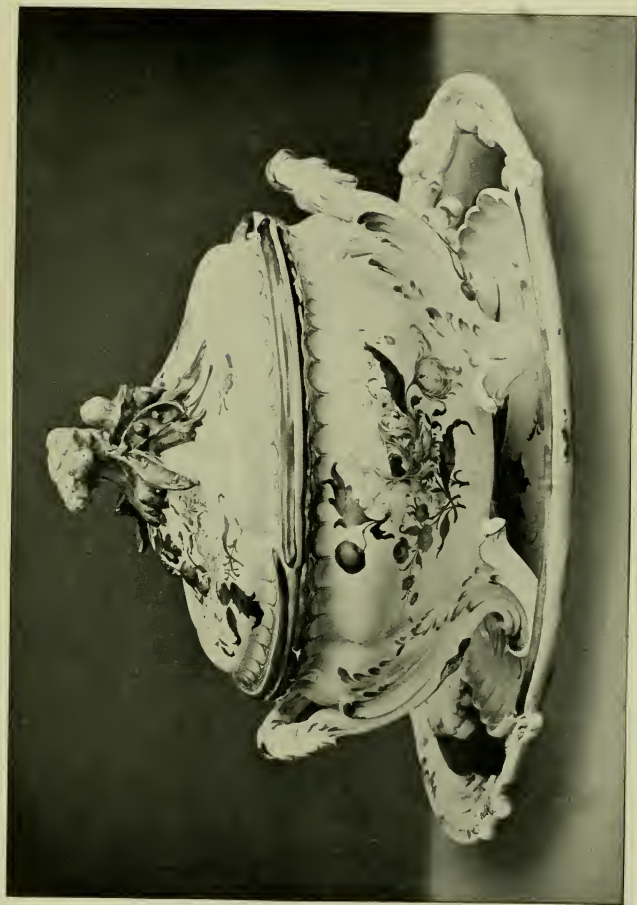
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NIDERVILLER.

Although derived directly from Strasburg, the factory of Niderviller slightly differed from its prototype by the higher standard of elegance and refined simplicity it adopted and always maintained in its productions. This was partly due to the social position of the man who presided over the foundation of the works, and to the cultivated taste of his wife, who took pride in assisting in the artistic management.

Baron de Beyerlé, director and treasurer of the Strasburg Mint, instigated by the success of Hannong's enterprise, resolved to embark on the manufacture of faïence. This was more a labour of love than a mere business speculation on the part of the Baron. Bent on taking an active part in the execution of his project, he left to no one else but himself the care of preparing the plans and superintending the building of the factory. All was ready to commence work in 1754. He himself selected the working staff from among the best painters and operators he found willing to leave Hannong's employment to enter his own. Lady Beyerlé, an artist of no mean talent, not only supplied sketches and models to the common decorators, but also painted some of the best pieces with her own hand. Anstett, a colour-maker of great experience, was made chemist and assistant director.

All efforts were directed towards the production of exceptional table services. The distinguished character of the shapes, inspired from the best works of the silversmith, the precious finish of the painted decoration, which equals that of the Saxon porcelain, make so many works of art of all the specimens entering into the composition of these services. In the ceramic collections many odd plates, enamelled with flowers, or painted with pleasant landscapes after the Dutch masters, figure with honour. The Niderviller faïence is amply represented in the Nancy Museum. There are now deposited the vessels once adorning the pharmacy of the Saint-Charles Hospital. They comprise two large orna-



NIDERVILLER.

FIG. 48.—SOUP-TUREEN.

D. $13\frac{1}{2}$ in.

mental vases, and several sets of smaller vases and drug-pots of various shapes and decoration, amounting together to 234 in number. The large vases, richly ornamented in the rocaille style, bear the royal arms of Stanislas, Duke of Lorraine and King of Poland. They are 3 feet 6 inches in height. The other pieces are decorated in a scheme of colour in which purple and pink largely predominate, or in plain blue.

Hardly any modification had to be brought into the current mode of decoration when, in 1768, the manufacture of hard porcelain was introduced, the same artists painting either *faïence* or porcelain in a similar style.

General Count Custine, another aristocratic personage, succeeded to Baron de Beyerlé as proprietor of the works in 1780. He appointed F. Lanfrey, a clever manufacturer, to act as practical director. A better man could not have been selected. Lanfrey introduced great improvements in all the existing branches of manufacture, and added to them the making of earthenware after the English fashion, an innovation which proved a source of success and profit. Through his mediation the sculptor Lemire left Lunéville and came to Niderviller, where he worked until 1808, modelling exquisite groups and figures for production in enamelled *faïence*, as well as in porcelain biscuit. Owing to the judicious and prudent management of Lanfrey, the factory under his care traversed in safety the stormy period of the Revolution, which carried away so many establishments of the same order. He purchased the whole property in 1801, and directed the manufacture until his death.

The ware made in the times of Beyerlé is seldom marked. Various combinations of the initials A. B. or B. N. are, however, found on some specimens. Under the ownership of Count Custine the production was, on the contrary, always marked with two C's, sometimes surmounted by a coronet. The name of Niderviller is frequently seen stamped on the biscuit pieces.

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LUNÉVILLE AND SAINT-CLÉMENT.

Within a few years the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine had become a busy nest of faïence factories. That of Lunéville was one of the most important. There, as indeed in all the other places, the guiding rule was to imitate Strasburg; the purpose, to snatch a portion of its prosperous trade. The first manufactory was established at Lunéville by Jacques Chambrette in 1731. His fast increasing business was soon ill at ease in the original building, and another, of much larger proportions, in which faïence, porcelain, and English earthenware were to be conjointly made, was erected in 1748. These two works still proving insufficient, a branch establishment was built in the neighbouring town of Saint-Clément in 1757. J. Chambrette died the year after the opening of the Saint-Clément factory. He was an intelligent and energetic manufacturer, worthy, on all accounts, of the patronage that the Dukes of Lorraine had extended to his industry. This patronage was continued by Duke Stanislas to the heirs and successors of Chambrette. But the father's business capabilities had not descended upon the sons; the state of affairs declined rapidly under their management. Gabriel Chambrette retired in 1772, and his brother-in-law, Loyal, remained in possession. At that time Chambrette & Co. owned another factory at Moyen, in the same district. In 1786, the Lunéville factory was purchased by S. Keller, grandfather of the present proprietor.

The stanniferous faïence made at Lunéville and Saint-Clément remained always very inferior to the types they proposed to imitate. It is heavy and coarse and poorly decorated. A curious speciality of the first-named works were the huge dogs and lions which had been adopted by all faïence and porcelain dealers in France as a trade sign. The same nondescript animals

PLATE XXII.

NIDERVILLER.

Compotier, Shell-Shaped.

L. $9\frac{1}{8}$ in. D. $8\frac{7}{8}$ in.

(See p. 112.)





NIDERVILLER.

FIG. 49.—COFFEE-POT PAINTED IN IMITATION OF
PINE-WOOD. SIGNED : KIRIAN PINXIT
DE, 1764.

H. $21\frac{1}{2}$ in.

figured as an architectural ornament on each side of the entrance gate of many châteaux and private dwellings. The earthenware, glazed with lead, showed a more skilful treatment. But it is in the biscuit groups, figures, and busts, made of a local white clay, neither earthenware nor porcelain, and generally stamped with the impressed mark, "Terre de Lorraine," that we find a style of production of really superior character. Guibal, sculptor to the King of Poland; Cyfflé, his pupil, particularly happy in the modelling of humorous and popular subjects; and Lemire, whose talent, of a more refined trend, has already been praised in the foregoing article, supplied the models.

Their work was also executed in painted faïence. Replicas of the best figures have practically never ceased to be produced; the moulds being still extant at the factories. The "Cobbler" and the "Darning Girl" of Cyfflé, for instance, are still abundantly found in the trade. But the modern copies have none of the sharpness and finish of the old specimens, and collectors run no risk of being deceived by such clumsy imitations.

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BELLEVUE *near* TOUL.

Charles Bayard, formerly director of the Lunéville factory, and François Boyer, described as an artist in *faïencerie*, purchased in 1771 the works occupied at Bellevue (Meurthe) by one Lefrançois since 1758. They made enamelled faïence decorated in the Strasburg style; they developed the manufacture of white earthenware, and produced a considerable quantity of biscuit groups and figures, after the models of Cyfflé and other sculptors of the time. The title of Royal manufactory was granted to

their establishment; but they kept it only for a few years. Bayard and his son, having separated from Boyer, started another factory at Toul, in which work was conducted on the same lines as at Bellevue. The ware of neither place was ever marked.

A price list of the groups and statuettes, which include the life-size figures in painted terra-cotta so popular for the adornments of gardens, was published by Ch. Bayard. Copies of it are still in existence.

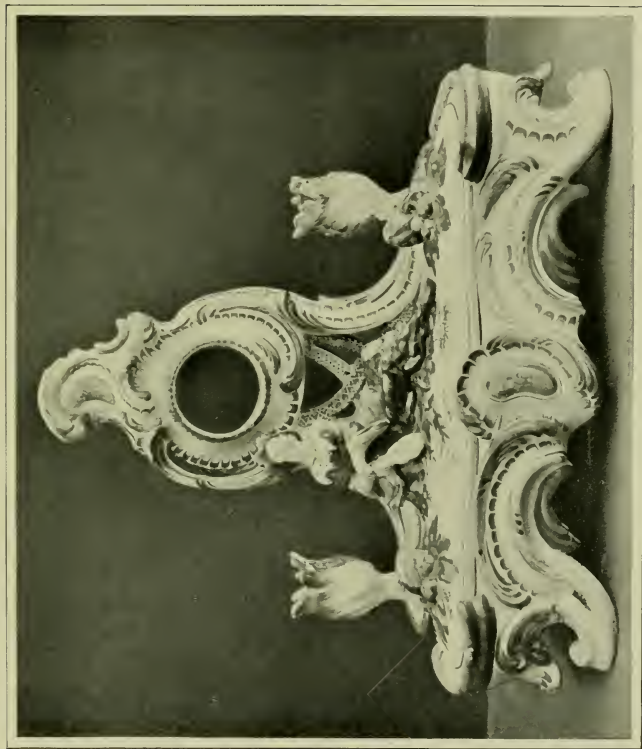
The names of the following factories may be added to the list of those which existed in Alsace and Lorraine during the eighteenth century:

Epinal (Vosges).—Rambervillers (Meurthe), of both of which particulars are missing. — Audun-le-Tiche (Meurthe), by Fr. Boch, in 1748; the cradle of mighty establishments of ceramic industry.—Nancy, by Nicolas Lelong, in 1774; in that factory the sculptor Clodion executed many of his charming terra-cotta figures.—Montigny (Meurthe), which had two factories belonging to Monsuy Pierrot and F. Cartier.—Vaucouleurs, started as a competitor to the foregoing, by Girault de Brinqueville, in 1738, —Thionville, mentioned as being at work in 1756.—Les Islettes, in 1737.—Sarreguemines, by P. Utzschneider, in 1770, etc.

MARSEILLES.

Marseilles should belong to the Moustiers group, not only by its geographical situation, but also by the character of its earlier productions. However, as the Marseilles faïence did not emerge from the common run of southern domestic ware before it affected the late method of over-glaze decoration which was appropriated with suitable modifications, it is classed, in the collections, among the works of the Strasburg school.

A large dish in the Davillier's collection, inscribed "A. Clérissy à St. Jean du dezert, 1697, à Marseilles," evidences the close correlation existing, from the outset, between the Marseilles and



LUNÉVILLE.

FIG. 50.—INKSTAND WITH WATCH-STAND AND
NOZZLES. STRASBURG STYLE.

L. 12 in. (*See p. 114.*)

the Moustiers potters. By the choice of the subject, representing a lion hunt, after A. Tempesta; by its treatment in blue outlined with manganese, and by the quality of the glaze, it might be included in the series of fine hunting dishes painted by G. Viry, and other artists in the employment of Pierre Clérissy. Such dishes were long attributed to Nevers, so closely do they resemble the ware of the Conrades. The considerable quantity of majolica from Savona, regularly imported into Marseilles, could not fail to influence the work of the local painters; the style had a common origin in both cases, and on that account the likeness of the productions is easily accounted for.

No documents have as yet been found that relate to the factory of A. Clérissy, but his faïence, says Mr. Davillier, is by no means rare. Many specimens were, in his time at least, to be picked up in Provence. They are generally decorated with motives borrowed from Oriental porcelain, painted under glaze with dull blue, outlined with manganese. The mark is the monogram A.C., or a simple C, cursively traced, and repeated several times on the same piece. An extensive set of drug-pots, to which the same origin may be ascribed, still garnishes the pharmacy of the Narbonne Hospital.

Of the faïence manufacturer Jean Delaressé, established in the town, according to Montreuil, in 1709, nothing remains beyond the record of his name.

We may assume that the conditions of the trade were steadily improving at Marseilles, from the fact that ten local factories were in full working order in 1750. Their output is said to have been considerable, and chiefly intended for exportation. But the ware never developed an individual character, and, owing to the lack of a distinctive mark, an authentic specimen of the work of that period has never been recognised. So successful had been the style of decoration inaugurated at Moustiers that, as a matter of course, the arabesques of Marot and Toro were strictly adhered to by the Marseilles

manufacturers. Under such conditions it becomes impossible to discriminate between the productions of these places. In the list of potters established in 1750 we find the names of J. B. Viry and Fauchiez, who came from Moustiers, and no doubt continued to practise their art after the method in use in their native town.

Compared with the state of the industry as it stood prior to 1765, the brisk vitality instilled into it by the leading manufacturers of the succeeding period forms a striking contrast. Breaking away from unproductive reminiscences, and entering on a totally new path, the Marseilles faïence issued from obscurity and took its stand in full light, equalling, when not surpassing, the most renowned wares of contemporary manufacture. No more hasty blue traceries which recalled the crockery made for the poor, but a display of brilliant enamels, and of surface painting so finely pencilled that faïence had henceforth nothing to envy in the more costly porcelain.

Honoré Savy must be named first for the share he took in this transformation.

By being transplanted to Marseilles the white enamel of Moustiers had lost none of its brilliance and purity; while the shapes to which Savy applied it, his ewers, stands, tureens, and other pieces of table ware, with their gracefully twisted and convoluted feet and handles, and the dainty groups of fruits and flowers that surmounted their covers, showed an elegance of design altogether unknown to the Moustiers potters. The artistic tendency of the manufacture has been attributed to the foundation of an Academy of Arts in the city, and to the facility it gave to the masters of selecting clever modellers and painters from among the rising artists trained in the school. Savy himself was an associate of the academy.

Savy's ware was all decorated over the glaze. He was partial to the use of a copper green enamel, laid in a flat tint over designs traced and shaded with black lines. A peculiarity of his work is that touches of the same transparent

PLATE XXIII.

NIDERVILLER.

Tray, Painted in Imitation of Pine Wood, with
Landscape in Pink on Scroll.

L. $13\frac{1}{8}$ in. W. $7\frac{3}{4}$ in.

(See p. 112.)





LUNÉVILLE.

FIG. 51.—THE SON OF P. P. RUBENS—FIGURE
IN EARTHENWARE, OR “FAIENCE
FINE.” (ATTRIBUTED TO THE
SCULPTOR CYFFLÉ).

H. 14 in. (*See p. 114.*)

green colour are applied over the dry spots left in the staniferous enamel by the cockspurs on which the piece rests during the firing. An official report of the time praises the excellence of his productions, described as "an immensity of works of all kinds."

In 1777, the Count of Provence, brother to the King, visited, in state, the manufactory of Savy, then one of the glories of the town. He was so satisfied with all that was shown to him that he graciously granted to the manufacturer permission to place the establishment under his patronage, and to call it henceforth "Manufacture de Monsieur, frère du roi." It is said that from that moment Savy adopted the "fleur-de-lis" as his mark; but this sign cannot be taken as a sure indication of origin, for it appears on many specimens of faïence of an obviously different *provenance*.

The factory of J. Gaspard Robert, the second in importance, was also visited, on the same occasion, by the Count of Provence. He much admired the large vases and other ornamental objects exhibited in the showroom, and was particularly pleased with a rich dinner service just executed for an English nobleman.

In point of artistic taste and perfection of treatment, a few examples selected from the faïence of J. G. Robert stand superior to any other ever made in the town. Many specimens are signed with his name in full, or are marked with a capital R; the individual characters of these pieces are of sufficient distinction for us to recognise others which have been left unmarked. The ornamentation of his dinner services is at once remarkable for the realistic accuracy of the details and the decorative effect of the whole scheme. A pattern often repeated consisted of fishes, shells, and sea-weeds, enamelled in bright copper green over a tracing in black, in the style originated by Savy. Another, also very successful, was composed of insects and wild flowers represented in their natural colours. Baskets, jardinières, comports, and dessert plates were embellished with elaborate panels containing a landscape or a

seaport view, animated with a multitude of minute figures painted in pink or sepia colour. In all cases the work of the artist is executed with so much delicacy and finish that it would have done credit to the most talented porcelain painters of Meissen or Frankenthal. The liberal use of fine gilding still further enhances the likeness that this style of decoration bears to porcelain painting.

A third manufactory, conducted by Widow Perrin, was running in close competition with those of Savy and Robert, which it equalled in importance. It produced about the same articles, not perhaps with the same degree of excellence, but it is said in much larger quantity. The mark V.P. adopted by Widow Perrin is found on a great many specimens of very good quality. Flowers painted in green, or in the Strasburg style, were the staple articles of the factory; one of its specialities seems to have been a yellow ground of particular brilliance, enamelled with bouquets of small flowers. As a whole the ware offers so little peculiarity that were it not for the mark it would be impossible to distinguish it from that produced by the other manufacturers.

The factory of Jacques Borelli, who came from Savona, must also be mentioned; its products, which are of a more ordinary sort, are marked in full: "Jacques Borelli."

The forger has been exceptionally busy in reproducing the finest types of the Marseilles faïence. The best imitations are said to come from Spain. It is, however, very easy to detect the fraud through the black outline, which, instead of being finely pencilled, is generally traced with a pen.

Imitations of the Marseilles ware were made at Aubagne, a neighbouring town, at the same period. Gournay, in his "*Almanach Général du Commerce*, 1788," says: "Aubagne has sixteen pottery works; in two of them faïence of the best style is made to order. They have a great export trade with the American Islands, and a home trade with Aix, Marseilles, and Toulon."



MARSEILLES.

FIG. 52.—SUGAR-BASIN AND STAND.

L. 11 in. (See p. 119.)

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LA ROCHELLE.

A learned archæologist, Mr. G. Musset, has embodied in a handsome volume the first of his historical researches on the transient existence of the faïence manufactories of La Rochelle and the surrounding region. We may say his exhaustive work is so well planned, so cleverly written, that no ceramic monograph could be presented in a more perfect form. Unfortunately the subject was quite unworthy of being developed with so much trouble and talent. No literary effort could ever have invested the coarse and insignificant productions the author had to deal with in the present case with any artistic or technical interest.

An account of the repeated attempts made between 1722 and 1754 to introduce the manufacture of painted faïence at La Rochelle, and of the abrupt failure which attended all these attempts, is not calculated to captivate our attention. Nor could an examination of the coloured reproductions of specimens, doubtless selected from among the best representatives of the ware, excite in us any desire to examine the originals. As to the names of the makers—Catarnet, Mourelon, Duboc, Bornier, De Briquerville, and others—they might as well be forgotten by any but local collectors.

It is recorded that in 1752 the factory that one P. Rousseng had conducted at Marans since 1740 was transported to La Rochelle. The event was followed by some improvement in the manufacture, and a more steady course of production was at last established. All the workmen employed had come from various

centres; hence the hybrid methods of decoration, in which the influence of the leading styles of other places may be faintly distinguished. This medley of styles prevailed in the decoration of the ware up to the moment when the method of painting with transparent enamels, put into fashion by P. Hannong of Strasburg, was exclusively adopted. Nowhere was the adaptation of the process to yield such deplorable results. A profitable outlet had been found for the bulk of the goods in the export trade with the French colonies of America. The emerald green and claret purple, which predominate in the painting of that period, were never too glaring and crude; the pseudo-Chinese personages which enliven the subjects could not be too grotesque to please the outlandish taste of the white and the negro customer of New Guinea, Canada, and the Antilles Islands, for whom they were intended. To a more educated eye their showy vulgarity is simply offensive. The same observation applies to the vases and fountains adorned with flowers in relief, occasionally manufactured; they are all in execrable taste. After the year 1790 the making of painted faïence at La Rochelle came finally to an end.

Several factories of a still inferior order had existed, or were in existence, in the province. One may mention the following: Saintes, established by L. Sazerac in 1731—three other manufactories were at work in the town at a later date; La Chapelle-des-Pots, long celebrated for its glazed pottery, where Daniel Bodin started some faïence-works in 1760. According to Ris-Paquot, Angoulême alone counted twelve minor establishments, of which he gives the names.

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PLATE XXIV.

MARSEILLES.

Plates.

(By VEUVE PERRIN.)^e

D. $9\frac{3}{4}$ in.

(See p. 120.)





MARSEILLES.

FIG. 53.—TWO-HANDLED BASIN AND STAND,
DECORATED IN COLOURS AND GOLD.
L. 11 in. (*See p. 119.*)

SCEAUX.

In no other place has the making of *faïence-porcelain* reached a higher degree of perfection than at Sceaux, a small town situated at a short distance from Paris.

De Bey, an architect, who had an interest in a local pot-works, and Jacques Chapelle—a man of multifarious abilities, with pretensions to being considered as a talented painter and sculptor, a physicist and chemist, who described himself, but without reason, as a member of the Royal Academy of Sciences, and a great traveller, who boasted of having mastered the trade secrets of the chief porcelain manufactories of Europe—called the support of capital to their assistance, and formed a company for the establishment of the manufacture of porcelain at Sceaux in 1748.

The year after, a spacious building had been appropriated to the purpose, and equipped with all the necessary appliances and tools; a staff of efficient workmen had been engaged; in short, all was ready to begin operations. But a bitter disappointment was in store for the promoters. They were confronted by the production of a royal privilege granted to one Charles-Adam for the sole making of porcelain after the fashion of Saxony, and an injunction to stop any further preparations. This Charles-Adam (probably one of the Hannongs) was acting, it is said, on behalf of a group of personages of high standing, who did not want their names to appear in the affair. They were all-powerful, and the disastrous blow could not be averted.

It was then that De Bey and Chapelle, undaunted by the failure of their original scheme, decided to manufacture, instead of the forbidden porcelain, a new kind of superior *faïence* “quite distinct from anything that had been done before,” and to which they gave the name of “*Faïence Japonée*.” They bore fully in mind that the epoch they lived in was one of supreme elegance and unbounded luxury. They knew that to secure fashionable patronage the dainty ware they purposed to make should

harmonise with the embroidered silk hangings and the lacquered furniture of a lady's boudoir, and not look out of place when a specimen of it was seen resting upon the gilt corner-shelves among the bejewelled knick-knacks of a *marquise*. Some of the charming jardinières of Sceaux, and some other small pieces, equally tastefully and richly decorated in gold and colours, show that they had not altogether overrated their capabilities.

The works, which had been taken under the special patronage of the Duchesse du Maine, were soon in full prosperity; in 1752 they gave employment to ninety potters and painters. Business proved so remunerative that, on his share of the profits, Jacques Chapelle found himself enabled in 1759 to buy out his partner and purchase the factory with all the outbuildings connected with it.

He adorned his residence and the surrounding grounds with embellishments which would have befitted a nobleman's mansion. In the reception room was a painted ceiling with figures representing the fine arts. The living rooms were elegantly decorated in camaieu. A flight of steps with a wrought-iron handrail led into the gardens. These were laid out in the formal style of the period. A fountain occupied the centre; the walks and groves were filled with a multitude of statues and faïence vases. Of these latter, forty-three of exceptional size were of Nevers manufacture. This much abridged description is taken from the inventory drawn up in 1763, when Chapelle retired from business and leased his manufactory to Jullien, one of his best painters, and the sculptor Ch. S. Jacques.

Jullien and Jacques remained in possession for nine years, after which Richard Glot acquired the whole property for 40,000 livres. A man of superior education, of experience in business, and an artist of talent, R. Glot did not let the Sceaux manufactory decline under his direction. Technical processes were still improved, better painters were selected, production was perfected regardless of cost. It is admitted that the finest specimens we admire in the collections were made during his



MARSEILLES.

FIG. 54. —PLATES BY J. G. ROBERT.
(See p. 119.)

time. The Duke de Penthièvre had become the patron of the works, and his support and influence contributed not a little to the success of the manufacturer. Many odd pieces of the rich dinner services that were made for the noble duke are still in existence. Most of them bear the name of the château for which they were intended. They allow us to form an idea of the good taste and high finish with which even table ware was executed.

At the outbreak of the great Revolution, Glot became implicated in political affairs, and during the persecution of which he was the object, he could give but little attention to the conduct of his business, which suffered considerably from that neglect and from the social perturbations of the time. He then broke all connection with faïence manufacture, and having sold his factory to P. A. Cabaret for an annuity of 6,000 livres, he retired to Versailles, where he died in 1813. From that moment all artistic work was abandoned, and a once glorious concern went down to the level of a purely commercial enterprise.

"Faïence fine" as well as stanniferous faïence was manufactured; both were decorated in a porcelain-like manner; soft porcelain of a fine quality was concurrently produced.

An anchor, in allusion to the dignity of the Duke de Penthièvre, High Admiral of France, or the stencilled name: "Sceaux," are the marks of the productions.

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APREY.

Lallemand de Villehaut, Baron d'Aprey, owner of a glass-works at Aprey, near Langres, established a factory of painted faïence in the same locality towards 1750. From the first he aimed at producing a ware of the best possible quality. Vessels

of silver supplied models for the forms; the over-glaze painting was inspired from the delicate decoration of the best French and German porcelain. Ceramic collectors show a great partiality for the specimens of Aprey faïence, painted with conventional birds of gaudy plumage, bearing the mark of Jarry, the chief painter of the place.

The founder of the factory retired in rather bad circumstances, and was succeeded by Baron d'Anthès de Longpierre, who left the concern in the hands of his foreman Olivier in 1789.

Many marks appear on the Aprey faïence, the monogram A.P. being usually accompanied with the painter's initial letters. But as marks were not used at the earliest period, the specimens on which we find them are mostly of an inferior order.



MARSEILLES.

FIG. 55. —VASE "POT POURRI": POLYCHROME
DECORATION.

H. 13½ in.



SCEAUX.

FIG. 56.—PLATE DECORATED IN THE PORCELAIN
STYLE.

(See p. 124.)



APREY.

FIG. 57.—SUGAR-BASIN WITH COVER AND STAND :
WHITE PANELS ON RED GROUND.
L. 9 in. (See p. 125.)

VIII.

RENNES.

NANTES—LECROISIC—MACHECOUL—QUIMPER.

RENNES.

BRITTANY has had its faïence factories like the other French provinces, but none of them ever left the routine field in which it moved, and attempted to stamp its productions with an individual character. The ceramic writers who have dealt with the manufactory of Rennes mention as exceptional examples of the ware, a large fountain and basin, a soup-tureen or two, some large garden vases, modelled in the rocaille style and heavily decorated in manganese and green, in the taste of the Marseilles faïence. Such specimens are all that a museum, anxious to complete its series of French ceramics, would care to show as representative of the Rennes manufacture; but pieces of that order are of such great rarity as to place that modest expectation almost beyond hope.

A few mortuary slabs, bearing inscriptions painted in black and blue upon a thick stanniferous enamel, were discovered in the cemetery of the town and deposited in the museum. They are dated respectively, 1653, 1679, and 1681. Several drug-pots, coming from the Saint-Yves Hospital, also in the museum, appear to belong to the same period. From this evidence, the existence of an early and permanent manufacture seems clearly established.

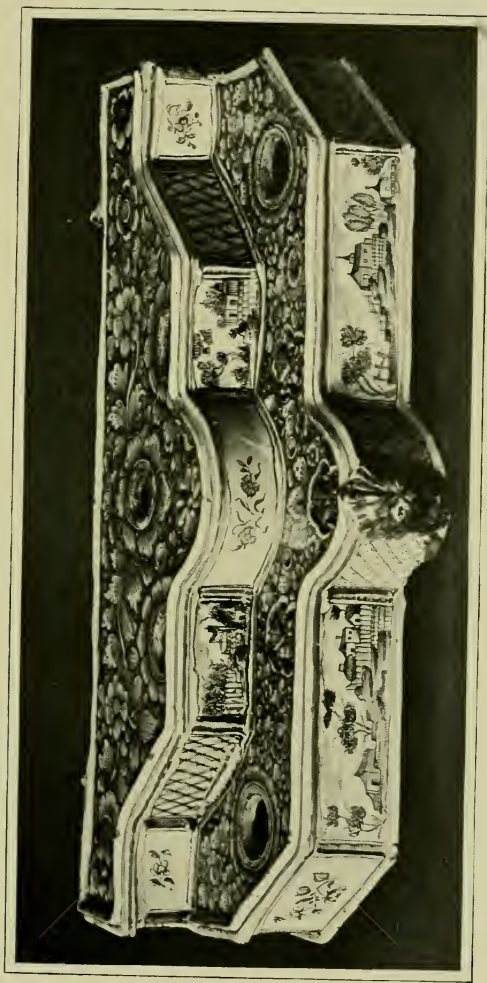
At Fontenay, a few miles from Rennes, a picturesque kind of pottery, glazed in various colours, was currently made at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Aussant gives the description of a few specimens attributed to the place, some of them, I regret to say, quite erroneously. Others, however, embossed with the arms of France and Navarre, and the *hermine* of Brittany cannot be made the subject of a doubt, when they are

compared with the glazed pinnacles and the painted terra-cotta mantelpieces still extant in old buildings of the region.

It is not, however, until 1748 that we find in the civic documents the record of a faïence manufactory having been founded by a Florentine majolist named Jean Forasassi, *alias* Barbarino. He may have simply prepared the way for one Emmerel de Charmoy, who took possession of the establishment at the end of the first year, worked it without any good result, and fell into bankruptcy in 1752. No example is known of the ware made by De Charmoy, nor by the company which succeeded him.

A sadly debased tradition of Italian majolica is, however, apparent in some small polychrome figures of the Holy Virgin and saints, still abundant in the country, and considered as belonging to the first period of manufacture; one of them is dated 1659. Let it be said at once, that Italian art has nothing to do with the modelling of these saintly images, sold for a few sous to the poor and pious peasants of Brittany; they rank among the clumsiest cottage ornaments, and have but little attraction for the ceramic collector.

The next proprietor of the works, Dubois de la Vrillière, had more artistic pretensions in his manufactures. He employed artists who often signed their work with their full name. Bourgoin, a native of Rouen, introduced the Rouen patterns. He modelled, in 1764, a reduction of the monument erected at the town hall in honour of Louis XV. A copy of it in white faïence is preserved in the museum. Bourgoin became director of the factory, and divided his time between the management of the workshops and of a little grocery business he had in the town. Another painter, Hirel de Choisy, has signed several pieces, namely a very elaborate inkstand he painted as an apprentice masterpiece, when he was only nineteen years of age. From Rennes, Hirel de Choisy joined the Royal factory of Sèvres, where he ended his life as a pensioner. The names of Michel, Baron, César Bayol, and others, are also found upon



RENNES.

FIG. 58.—INKSTAND PAINTED IN BLUE AND
YELLOW : INSCRIBED "FECITTE G.
BOURGAIN A RENNES LE 12 8BRE
1763."

L. 9 in. (See p. 130.)

exceptional specimens. The faïence works founded by Barbarino lingered until 1887.

A rival factory had been started, in the Rue Hüc, by Tutrel, in 1749; with the assistance of a loan of 12,000 livres, granted to the enterprise by the States of Brittany, he just managed to struggle painfully against adverse circumstances. Du Lattay, a surgeon, who succeeded Tutrel, attempted to transform the whole style of manufacture, by engaging a few experienced painters from Marseilles. They worked at Rennes as they had been trained to work in the place where they came from, and the curious likeness noticeable between the Brittany and the Provence ware is explained in that way. Some of the best examples are inscribed, "Fait à Rennes, Rue Hüc." They are very superior to the common run of pieces of the same origin, but decidedly inferior to the average of the Marseilles faïence. The loan was never repaid to the States, and after a succession of inextricable crises the works were at last closed in 1790.

The Vaumort factory was at work between 1812 and 1878. Its productions offer nothing that calls for special attention.

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NANTES.

Ancient documents establish the fact that Jean Ferro, an Italian gentleman and glassmaker, received royal letters-patent for the manufacture of glass and "white vessels, or faïence," in the town of Nantes, at the end of the sixteenth century, and that his nephew, Antoine Ribé, took over the business in 1625. Of the ware they made no record is in existence.

A kind of common white faïence, embossed with fleur-de-lys

painted over in blue, is attributed by Benjamin Fillon to the factory of Charles Guermer and Jacques Rolland, founded in 1654. But this is merely a conjecture. It will devolve upon the patient and sagacious investigator of the days to come to affix the correct label upon the still unauthenticated examples of the early faïence of Nantes. B. Fillon mentions also the works established in 1752 by Leroy de Montigny, which, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, were in the hands of Fourmy. This Fourmy was an interesting personality, a consummate ceramist, gifted with incontestable talent, but a dreamer so unsuccessful in all his enterprises, that an account of his life reads like a romance. He left some remarkable ceramic treatises, which have become rare, and which deserve to be reprinted.

The museum of Nantes possesses numerous examples of the Rivas factory, started in 1734, and which increased to sufficient proportions to become a Royal factory in 1774. They imitated the Rouen patterns, and subsequently made "Patriotic faïence" of the usual description.

A neighbouring town, Le Croisic, can show musty parchments testifying to the early establishment in the place of the faïence industry. Through these documents we are made aware of the fact that Gérard Demigennes, who came from Flanders, was making white pottery, after the fashion of his own country, towards the end of the sixteenth century, and that he was succeeded by an Italian, Horacio Borniola, in 1627. We also hear that the manufacture was successfully continued for years afterwards. Historical information is, unfortunately, all we possess in reference to the faïence of Le Croisic. So-called specimens of that origin were sent to the retrospective exhibition of Rennes in 1864; but nothing has come to light since then to confirm the correctness of the attribution.

The same uncertainty is attached to the making of majolica, at Machecoul, by the brothers Jacopo and Loys Ridolfi, of Caffaggiolo; it is only a tradition, which has never been substantiated.

QUIMPER.

From 1690 white and blue faïence was made at Quimper by a potter named J. B. Bousquet, who had come from Provence, and is said to have produced inferior imitations of the wares of Moustiers and Marseilles. A few specimens of this style, bearing the coats of arms of some ancient families of Quimper, serve to support the assumption.

Pierre Caussy, the son of one of the leading manufacturers of Rouen, assumed the management of the Bousquets' factory in 1749. He came over provided with a large stock of models, designs, and tracings, and in addition an exhaustive treatise on faïence manufacture that the experienced father had prepared for the benefit of his son. This MS., which contains about 400 pages, is still in the possession of his descendants.

Under the direction of Caussy the Rouen style asserted its paramount influence; nothing but the traditional patterns were executed, with very slight modifications. Whether it was that the materials employed were not of sufficiently good quality, or that such hands as were obtainable had not received a proper training, the would-be imitations never approached the average standard of the originals. The "Cornucopia" and the "Quiver" patterns, as well as other graceful designs of the "rocaille" period, cannot stand comparison with the models. In the Quimper productions the colours always lack vigour and brilliance, and, to make up for that weakness, all details are heavily outlined with manganese. The glaze is poor and of a greyish hue. A mark composed of the two letters P.C., or simply C., occurs occasionally on the ware.

A. de la Hubeaudière succeeded Caussy, his father-in-law, in 1782. As stanniferous faïence was then falling into utter discredit, the manufacture of earthen- and stone-ware after the English fashion was substituted for the older wares towards 1794. All that was made after that time is absolutely devoid of artistic interest.

A curious revival took place in 1872. As old Quimper faïence was greatly in demand, the firm, taking advantage of the original recipe-book, and the drawings and tracings still preserved at the works, thought it expedient to reproduce the ancient models. They succeeded in making their spurious ware sufficiently deceptive to allow unscrupulous dealers in curiosities to palm it off as genuine examples of Rouen and Quimper upon unwary purchasers. These worthless shams have found their way into ceramic collections; the mark H.B. (Hubeaudière), which was affixed to them, looks too much like an old mark to have been placed there as a warning. This must be remembered by the collector.

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IX.

SAINT-OMER.

AIRE — DÈSVRES — HESDIN — BOULOGNE-SUR-MER — VRON — CALAIS
— DOUAI — MONTEREAU — SARREGUEMINES.

SAINT-OMER.

CONVINCING evidence has been left to us by the Mediæval tile-makers of Saint-Omer that painting in various colours upon white pottery had been practised in France at a much earlier date than that of the introduction of Italian majolica. No ceramic history contains any description of the pavement discovered in the ruins of Saint-Bertin in 1843. Its composition presented this peculiar feature, that white tiles were introduced as central panels and borders in a groundwork of red and yellow inlaid tiles of the usual character. These unprecedented specimens appear to have been made of the local white clay still used for the manufacture of tobacco-pipes. They are painted with equestrian figures of knights, armed with swords and armorial shields, just as we see them represented upon the heraldic seals of the fourteenth century; and with scriptural subjects. The colours used are yellow and green outlined in black. Owing, no doubt, to imperfect firing, the substance has been partly decomposed by the dampness of the soil, and almost the whole of the white tiles crumbled into dust in the hands of their discoverers. The fragments were ruthlessly thrown away. Only two of these tiles, in a tolerable state of preservation, were deposited in the town museum. They show what the rest may have been, and make us regret the carelessness with which the excavations were conducted in the case of a discovery which has never been repeated. Nothing of a contemporary period can be called to mind that is equivalent to these curious tiles, unless it be the archaic painted pottery of Faenza. We are not, however, without historical record of such a work having been made in the North of France during the fourteenth century. M. Houdoy has

recorded, in his "*Histoire de la céramique lilloise*," the existence of the letters-patent granted in 1391 by Philippe le Hardi, Duke of Burgundy, to Jehan de Moustiers and Jehan-le-Voleur, "*ouvriers en quarriaux peints et jolis*," and also of a document referring to the painted pavements that these tilemakers were to execute "in their art," after the designs prepared by the celebrated painter Melchior Broedelain, for the ducal palaces of Arras and Hesdin. The two tiles preserved in the Saint-Omer Museum answer satisfactorily enough the idea we may form of these "quarries, painted and pretty." Many of them may have been made, but the imperfectly fired clay could not stand the destructive power of time. We cannot consequently be surprised if nothing but the two damaged examples in the museum has escaped the general annihilation of the work of J. de Moustiers and Jehan-le-Voleur.

From the Mediæval times we have to jump into the eighteenth century to find painted faïence manufactured at Saint-Omer by one Saladin in 1751. The same potter had previously attempted to start a factory at Dunkirk, but his intention had been frustrated by the opposition of the Lille manufacturers, who were protected by a royal privilege. Having settled at Saint-Omer, he began to manufacture imitations of the wares most in demand at the time. He was particularly successful in the production of the picturesque pieces representing vegetables, fruits, and animals that the Delft and Brussels factories had brought into fashion. A soup-tureen in the shape of a colossal cabbage, executed with extraordinary care, inscribed and dated 1759, is quoted as testimony of an excellence of manufacture which rendered his imitations as perfect as the models. Several replicas of that piece are still in existence, one of them in the ceramic museum of Sèvres.

It is, however, only at Saint-Omer that the ware may be studied in all its modifications. The civic museum, and the Musée Henri Dupuis, contain important collections of the faïence

of local manufacture, in which, besides the fancy articles just alluded to, the painted pieces of various periods are adequately represented. Some of the earliest pieces are painted upon Persian blue ground, with scrolls and foliage of white enamel, after the old Nevers style. The Chinese subjects, such as were made at Rouen, or rather at Sinceny, the pale tints of which were affected, were next produced. Lastly, the rocaille decoration, so successfully indulged in at Lille, was adopted conjointly with the bouquets and sprays of conventional flowers common to all the factories of the North. No special mark was ever used; however, some specimens are known to be inscribed: "St. Omer," with various dates. A single instance is recorded of a painter having signed his work with his name; that of Candart occurs upon one of the specimens in the town museum. So frequent in every scheme of decoration is the presence of a small fly of peculiar design, that it has come to be considered as a certificate of origin. The making of "faïence fine" in the English style was started in opposition to the Douai factory. But the attempt did not save the Saint-Omer factory from sharing the fate of all the establishments of the same order which the social events brought to utter ruin at that moment; it closed its door shortly after 1790.

Whether Saladin's enterprise ever raised any competition in the town itself has not yet been ascertained. The quantity of painted faïence of nearly the same description still to be found in the province is so considerable that it can scarcely be attributed to one single factory. It is now known that several small faïence works, all situated in close proximity, had contributed to this plentiful supply, and that their productions were by no means inferior in quality to those of Saint-Omer.

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AIRE.

At Aire-sur-la-Lisse good faïence was made since the year 1780 by one Joseph Prudhomme. The factory was by no means remiss in following the variations of public taste; the designs in the Rouen style were replaced in due time by Strasburg patterns. That clever painters were employed is evidenced by a white and blue jug, painted with no mean talent with figures of musicians; it bears the inscription:

ANNO, 1731. MESSIEVRS IE VOVS INVITE, ICI A BOIRE VN
COV AV CONCERT.

Some medallions of heads in relief, heightened with blue and manganese, were imbedded in the walls of the ancient factory. They have been transferred to the Saint-Omer Museum. They assist us in the identification of the unmarked ware. A pale yellow of a particular tint is another of its distinctive characteristics. This factory also came to an end at the close of the eighteenth century.

DÈSVRES.

Dèsvres, in the same region, had a rather prolific factory, conducted in 1732 by Dupré-Poulaine on the site of the pottery works established by César Boulonne in 1515. Much of the ware made by D. Poulaine may be recognised through its likeness to a large faïence mantelpiece, once adorning a room in the old works, and now exhibited in the museum. The painting is always heavily outlined with dark manganese and filled in with flat tints in which a pale yellow predominates.

Poulaine was succeeded in 1764 by J. F. Sta. One of the staple articles of manufacture were mustard-pots, inscribed: "La moutarde de Dèsvres est meilleure que celle de Dijon." The same manufacturers are also responsible for the making of the drinking pots in the shape of a figure of an old woman in

tall linen cap and flowered petticoat, so popular in the provinces of Northern France under the name of "Jacquelines," a counterpart of our English "Toby" jug. Also at Dèsvres were made the quaint salt-cellar, formed of two female figures standing back to back, forgeries of which are found in all continental curiosity shops. Of a higher order of work is the large pitcher preserved in the Saint-Omer museum. It is painted with a figure of St. Antony of Padua, and dated 1783. This rare but duly authenticated production is equal in treatment to the best works of the chief centres.

HESDIN.

Through certain large platters painted in blue with half length figures, we come to know the character of the ware made at Hesdin in the same region. To this factory, Mr. Boyer de Sainte-Suzanne ascribes a priority of foundation over all the others. The dishes, not uncommonly found in the locality, are decorated, among other subjects, with the image of a girl holding a flower, or that of a bewigged and cuirassed warrior, to whom popular tradition has given the name of "Marlborough," doubtless in recollection of the far-famed commander of the British Army. A peculiarity of the Hesdin dishes is that the central subject is never accompanied by any ornamental border. In the statistics for 1812, the Hesdin factory is mentioned as employing ten workmen, and having an annual production of the value of 26,000 francs.

BOULOGNE-SUR-MER.

A numerous colony of common potters, working in association with the brick and tile makers, had been settled for centuries outside the walls of the city of Boulogne; it is said to have been organised into a thriving community. Such vessels as they made were of the coarsest description, and destined for the poorest classes. Yet it was not unusual to see fanciful articles,

of elaborate workmanship, prepared by some skilful craftsman for a special occasion. A few of these interesting performances, jugs of archaic form, quaintly embossed, and glazed with green or brown, and large dishes with bold designs incised in the ground or traced with coloured slips, are preserved in the Boulogne Museum; they testify to the imaginative power and ability of the local potters. None of them, however, seems to have ever troubled himself with the ambition of replacing his antique handicraft with the new manufacture of white faïence. It was by a tradesman of the town, named Verlingue, who had little or no experience as a potter, that the first faïence factory was established in 1773. Dèsvres supplied a competent manager and a staff of reliable workmen; and in this way they went on making domestic vessels and wall tiles glazed with stanniferous enamel. It was neither better nor worse in quality than the average ware of the other minor works of the region, but it might be difficult to point out a painted specimen that could be added to a ceramic collection as an ornament; if it is of some interest for the history of local industry, it cannot be said to possess any artistic merit. Verlingue never succeeded in getting out of the difficulties with which he found himself confronted at the very beginning of his enterprise; he had to give up after twenty-five years of hopeless struggle.

It is as the founder of the small but interesting factory of Vron, situated on the road to Abbeville, that Verlingue deserves to be remembered. We have seen that he was not a potter; his experience at Boulogne does not seem to have much improved his technical knowledge, and the ware made at Vron under his management is singularly primitive in character. The clay is coarse, the forms clumsily fashioned, the glaze dull, blistered and crazed. As for the painted decoration, it denotes the hand of a self-taught native artist, who had evidently never seen anything better than the woodcuts of the penny chap-books, the only form of art which ever penetrated into the village, and which the faïence painter tried his best to imitate. His work may be

classed with the paintings of the so-called "Faïence Patriotique," then made all over France, but it stands far behind the productions of the chief centres. Yet, it is precisely the incomparable "naïveté" displayed in these topical caricatures, unequalled anywhere else for the childishness of the conceptions and the comicality of the design, that causes the domestic ware and the painted wall tiles of Vron to be sought after by certain collectors.

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CALAIS.

The name of Calais is found impressed underneath some pieces of a thoroughly English character, cream colour jugs, stands, or dinner services of white earthenware, printed in blue with the willow pattern, and other Staffordshire subjects. They come from a factory established at St. Pierre-lès-Calais in 1812, by Mr. de Ferque, and sold by him two years afterwards to an English company directed by Messrs. Pain, Bayley, and Shirley. The productions could not compete against the English importations, and the unsuccessful enterprise soon came to an end.

DOUAL.

We have seen that the making of earthenware glazed with lead, or "faïence fine," was introduced, more or less extensively, in nearly all the French faïence works of a late period. A strict affectation of copying English models did not leave the ware a chance to develop a national character. A few particulars concerning the establishment of the most important works in

which pottery, in the English fashion, was exclusively manufactured, would not be without interest for the industrial history of ceramics ; the productions, considered from the artistic point of view, are too insignificant, as a rule, to deserve much attention.

I will take the factory established at Douai in 1780 as a fair type of all those in which the actual processes used in England were bodily imported and carried on in a practical manner, so as to secure success and profit to the manufacturers. The history of the commencement of all kindred pottery works of the epoch differs but little from that of the Douai works.

Two brothers, Charles and Jack Leigh, coming from Staffordshire, and describing themselves as potters' managers, arrived in the town in 1780. They were anxious to find sufficient capital to set up an earthenware factory on the principles adopted in their own country. At that moment the duties charged upon the ware imported from England were so high as to be virtually prohibitive ; much of it, however, seems to have found its way into France, where it was highly appreciated. The scheme presented by the Englishmen was well calculated to please a bold investor, and a merchant of the town, named J. Bris, undertook to find the necessary funds. It was agreed that the Leighs would supply all the recipes, and the plans of the ovens ; besides, they were to make the ware with their own hands, and glaze and fire it themselves. On account of the density of the body the ware was called "*Grès Anglais*," or English stoneware ; in reality it was cream-colour of the ordinary description. For about two years the work went on sluggishly, making little progress, and yielding no pecuniary profit. A new company was formed by Houzé de l'Aulnoit, solicitor and town clerk ; spacious premises were built, a large number of hands were engaged, and money was freely poured into the concern. From 1782 to 1787 the business kept on increasing and improving, and all seemed to promise a lasting success ; unfortunately, the treaty of commerce with England, which allowed English ware to enter the kingdom

at a nominal rate, rendered further competition impossible, and the brilliant expectations entertained at the commencement were never realised.

No compromise was ever made with a view to adapting the productions to the French taste. The shapes, modelled by an English modeller, were almost identical reproductions of those in vogue at Leeds and in the Potteries. The Leighs were assisted by five of their countrymen, and no French artist or potter had a hand in the work. Plates with perforated borders, cruet-stands, and fancy pieces with pierced work, vases and jugs with floriated handles, were all inspired by, when not actually copied from, the Leeds catalogue. The materials were cream-colour, red and black clay, and agate ware. A few specimens are marked "LEIGH & Co.," impressed in the clay; but for this mark they might well pass muster for inferior English earthenware of the eighteenth century. The last oven was fired in 1820.

A competition to the Leighs' Company was started by one Dammann, in 1799. He made the same articles, but apparently with little success. His ware was marked with his name in full.

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MONTEREAU.

The establishment of the Montereau earthenware works is said to be due to W. Clark and Shaw, who came from the Potteries, accompanied by a few workmen of the same district, in 1775. They were supposed to come on their own account, and they alleged as their reason for settling at Montereau the presence in the vicinity of a white clay of a still better quality than the one used in England. In all probability they were subsidised by some French capitalists, whose names have never

transpired. At any rate, they were supported by local influence, for in the very year of their arrival they obtained from the town an annual grant of 1,200 livres. No particulars have come to hand as to the progress of the manufacture during the first twenty years. They made Queen's ware and "terre de pipe," and not without success. One Merlin Hall was the last English director. The business had passed entirely into French hands, and there was no longer question of English partners when, in 1794, it had reached such proportions that it was thought expedient to open a new branch at Creil. Good management had enabled the Montereau works to stand against the trying consequences of the Treaty of Commerce, and to traverse, unaffected, the period of a social upheaval which had ruined many other factories. The Creil branch was placed under the direction of Mr. de Saint-Crick, and it was soon as prosperous as the head centre. Transfer printing was for the first time in France currently practised upon faïence. Dinner services decorated in that manner had a great sale. They were printed in black over the glaze with figure subjects and views of towns or monuments. Many of them remain to show that the process was never perfectly mastered; the impressions are pale and blurred, and very far from approaching the neatness and brilliance of the English transfer printing on earthenware.

SARREGUEMINES.

Regular "faïence fine," after the fashion of Alsace—that is to say, a yellow ware covered with a transparent glaze—was at first manufactured at Sarreguemines by Paul Utzschneider towards 1775. It was only at the beginning of the nineteenth century that the English processes were adopted in all their varieties. The price lists published in 1810 contain nothing which is not described as being "in the English taste." Thus they made Queen's ware, black basalt, and especially agate and marbled ware. Choice specimens of these might be called quite excellent

if we could discard the recollection of Wedgwood's similar productions, to which they are vastly inferior.

An immeasurable span stretches between the bright and lively faïence of Rouen and Nevers and the formal and cold earthenware made in France less than a century afterwards. Disjointed as seems the filiation, the latter was the consequence of the former. The ware of the Franco-English potter has little to attract our fancy ; yet it cannot be ignored. In it we see the source of all modern pottery. A brief record of its modest commencements assumes a certain interest when we compare its early conditions to the amazing ceramic industry that was to be derived from it.

THE REVIVAL
OF
THE ART OF FAÏENCE PAINTING.

THE REVIVAL OF THE ART OF FAÏENCE PAINTING

FAÏENCE painting, as an art, was dead and forgotten during the first part of the nineteenth century. Its dying days had been grotesque, and no one cared whether it would ever be revived. As a trade it still found its application in the pencilling of social and revolutionary emblems much appreciated by the rural politician, and of the "gay" rose which his wife found greatly to her taste. But the treatment of all these popular subjects had gradually become so crude and coarse that anything which looked like painted faïence was rejected, by the fastidious inhabitants of the town, as thoroughly objectionable.

Another cause of this disfavour was that radical improvements in the manufacture of hard porcelain had brought a new ware within the reach of the middle classes. So beautiful was its white and pure substance that a costly decoration could well be dispensed with. This gave rise to a preference for plain surfaces; from porcelain the taste soon extended to faïence and earthenware, which it became fashionable to use in the white. Nothing that might recall the vulgarity of the painted soup plates and salad dishes sold on the marketplace could be tolerated in a house furnished with any pretension to good taste and refinement. Pottery decoration was on the point of being completely banished; a few subjects in black transfer-printing found an exception to this general rule, but only on account of the novelty of the process just introduced by some English potters.

I am not forgetting that, at the time I am speaking of, handsomely and expensively decorated wares were still required

for the palace and the mansion. In the porcelain manufactories the noble and the wealthy could obtain the gratification of their most extravagant fancies. But the faïence decorator, whose popular talent had long supplied all classes with artistically-painted vessels, had completely disappeared, and, as I have just said, faïence painting, as an art, was dead and forgotten.

Here I beg leave to introduce a few words by way of vindication of a fascinating pursuit, mercilessly scoffed at by the witty, and severely censured by the wise, as soon as it threatened to take an extensive development. While the debased handicrafts of the day were sinking to the lowest level, and all the traditions of a glorious past were being well-nigh forgotten, a small group of spirited men, gifted with inborn taste and guided by a fast-growing experience, were actively engaged in hunting out and quietly hoarding up the relics of the departed arts which the living generation was ruthlessly discarding as old-fashioned and worthless incumbrances. The collecting rage was still in its embryonic state, and yet the results achieved by these few members of the gentle craft were nothing short of astounding. It is strange that the part played by the collector of "curiosities," as he was called, in the artistic revival that was taking place at that moment should have been so completely misinterpreted. A collector was represented as a kind of harmless monomaniac, piling up, aimlessly, a host of nondescript oddities, with no possible profit to himself or to others; he was above all taunted with unpardonable selfishness for wasting upon futile antiquities the money that would have been so much better employed in supporting the industries of his own country. The character of the true collector, his influence on the transformation of public taste, should not suffer from the recollection of a caricature which no judicious person could ever take as a portrait. It ought to be recollected that by redeeming from their hiding place, rescuing from impending destruction, and bringing into full light masterpieces

of workmanship of unparalleled excellence, the collector has, unquestionably, headed the revolutionary movement of his epoch and done more than anybody else in arousing from their inertia the various branches of decorative art.

A cabinet of curiosities—the compound term “Works of industrial Art” had not yet been coined—offered a miscellaneous assemblage of objects which, undeniably artistic as they were in their scope, had not yet received admittance into public museums. Connoisseurs and artists were always welcome to inspect and study the treasures accumulated by a liberal-minded collector. In the contrast that these choice productions of the past presented to all that was made at the moment the appreciative visitor found ample food for cogitation. At the sight of the marvels revealed to them for the first time, the designer, the carver, the painter—in short, all craftsmen of the higher grade—became suddenly alive to the sense of their own capacity, and strove, from that moment, to impart to their work at least a reflex of the genius and the talent that pervaded the creations of the old masters.

It should always be recollected that, if the stupendous museums formed shortly afterwards, on a similar plan, have done so much to improve the tendencies of all artistic industries by providing for the higher education of industrial artists, their formation was chiefly due to the influence exerted by the eclectic amateur, and the immense interest elicited by the private collections.

Among the household ornaments which a sweeping change in the public taste had condemned as vulgar and unseemly, none had been more abruptly put out of sight by their owner than the articles of old-fashioned faïence. Regardless of this unjust verdict, the early collector gave a large share of attention to the ancient vessels of painted clay, for which he entertained a marked predilection. Such an immense quantity of decorative ware had been manufactured in France, that, as long as he remained the isolated explorer of an untrodden field,

the harvest he gathered in his researches was as precious as it was abundant.

Let us, now, represent to ourselves what must have been the feelings of an earnest man, conscious of the degraded state of the manufactures of his time, when brought face to face with the finest examples of Palissy ware, or of the Nevers, Rouen, and Moustiers faïence of the best period, proudly staged in the cabinets of the collector in imposing array. Excited by such an inspiring display, a fervid ambition to revive the forgotten art and to produce anew ceramic marvels was bound to arise within the brains of the few admirers who felt themselves bold enough to make the attempt. Strenuous efforts were prosecuted with a view to recovering the lost secrets of the faïence painter, and it must be said, to the credit of the collector, that the first experiments found in him an enlightened patron and a most liberal supporter.

A curious tale could be written about those probationary times, and the singular individualities that the fad of a moment, and the interest created by their mysterious experiments, brought into notice, fifty or sixty years ago. In the gallery of the collector, and in the studio of the artist, certain erratic and impecunious persons could often be met with who gave themselves out as the "arcanists" of faïence-making. They boasted no special qualification either as chemists or potters, but they dabbled with glazes and colours, and exulted in the firm conviction that Destiny had marked them out to be the renovators of ceramic art. No precise information concerning their doings could be obtained from them; they looked grave and suspicious, and repeatedly hinted at some researches and discoveries just on the point of completion, which had only to come into light to show that the modern potter had nothing to envy in the greatest masters of ancient times. The names of "Bernard" and "Luca" recurred constantly in their discourses. In their own estimation, a kindred nature of soul and of genius, which connected their intellectual being

with the spirits of Palissy and Della Robbia, warranted this brotherly appellation.

Little was known about the worldly circumstances of these eccentric personages; they managed, however, to excite sympathy and to inspire a certain degree of confidence. It was accepted that they were the pioneers of the coming science, and that, so far, poverty and ill-luck had hampered their labours and retarded their assured success. The dingy hovel, dignified by the name of laboratory, and the rickety kiln built with their own hands, in which their cryptic operations were performed, were forbidden ground. Occasionally, however, some faithful believer was admitted into the precincts and permitted to have a peep at the latest trials. Had the *genius loci* been an adept of the black art, the practice of his magical incantations could not have excited more reverential curiosity than the production of his surprising achievements as a transcendental potter. As a matter of course, the privileged visitor who had enjoyed such a rare favour hastened to circulate, within the circle of his acquaintances, a glowing account of the promise yielded by all that he had seen. Then it happened that some good-natured art critic, moved by the forsaken conditions of one of these outlaws of the ceramic art, ventured to insert a notice of his life and work in some influential periodical. The article narrated, with heart-rending pathos, the story of the sufferings, the hopes and the disappointments that the down-trodden potter had had to go through in his search after the Unknown, and it ended in foretelling the triumphant finish which was soon to crown so many years of toilsome ordeal. Little more was wanted to bring the man into momentary notoriety, and the commonplace original of a highly fanciful literary sketch hastened to profit by the interest thus thrown upon his name.

These irregular forerunners of the true renovators of a disused art formed a rather mixed group. Some were mere impostors who, during their short stay in the various factories where they

had found casual employment, had acquired a smattering of pottery manufacture. This enabled them to present, with a great flow of technical terms, alluring schemes and projects, framed with sufficient cunning to impose upon friendly credulity. Elaborate preparations were set on foot, on their suggestion, at the expense of their dupes, but, as a rule, they did not lead to anything of practical value.

Others were, on the contrary, thoroughly honest in their purpose; but they were often no more than self-deluded dreamers, miscalculating the range of their possibilities, and although full of glorious aspirations, quite as incapable of lending real assistance to the movement as the unscrupulous deceiver. Heedless of their utter ignorance of the most elementary rules, these aspirants to ceramic fame were ceaselessly concocting random mixtures of chemical substances, and making trials of colours that would not develop, and glazes that would not shine, upon pots that would always break. Any result that was not a complete failure was to them a step towards the coming victory. Naturally enough they valued their miserable achievements in proportion to the trouble they had taken in producing them.

The Marquis of Monestrol is to be remembered as the most accomplished personification of the type. A fanatic admirer of pot-making and of its mysteries, the impoverished marquis set up a very scantily equipped workshop in the small village of Rungis, near Orléans. There he lived for years in absolute seclusion, throwing, glazing and baking pots with his own hands, and after his own ideas. Anxious to have all the credit of his discoveries, he declined to receive any advice from practical potters. His ambition was to be regarded by his contemporaries as a modern Palissy. He was proud to relate that, in his lonely retreat and in the course of his experiments, he had suffered the same misfortunes, ill-success, and privations as the legendary hero. As a counterpart to Palissy's memoirs he published, under the title of "*Le*

Potier de Rungis," a poem in twenty-six cantos, in which the tale of the struggles he had manfully sustained against an inexorable fatality, which always defeated his best matured plans, was unfolded in pathetic but execrable verse. In all other respects than his unfortunate passion for the ceramic art—a life-long attachment which was never to be requited—Monestrol is said to have been a man of remarkable intellect.

Meantime some good work was being done, apart from the false pretences of the quack and the despicable failures of the crank. A few sincere and painstaking enthusiasts—half potters, half artists—had been prosecuting researches in the right direction, and could show some really creditable results. Their aim was to produce an artistic pottery that could stand close comparison with the best works of the Renaissance times, then considered as inimitable. They copied Palissy ware, Nevers and Rouen faïence. To the great astonishment of all those interested in the matter, and probably to their own surprise also, some of the copies happened to be almost as good as the originals. Far from confessing, however, that the success was due to a judicious use of the regular traditions of the faïence-maker, still partially preserved in the trade, they surrounded their operations with increased mystery, and talked louder than ever of the arduous difficulties they had had to overcome. No one was prepared to contest the veracity of their pretensions, and the outcome of their simple discovery was acclaimed as an astounding revelation.

It must be said that the sanguine and confident amateur of the time was but too ready to admire blindly anything that appealed to his love of the ceramic art. So intense was his infatuation for the old faïence, that any tolerable reproduction made by a modern potter, was to him a wonderful performance. His ill-grounded judgment seemed to court deception; and many an impudent forgery gained access to his collections without having raised the slightest suspicion.

It was in those days that a Palissy dish of exceptional

dimensions was purchased for 20,000 francs, a record price, by Dr. J. Cloquet. The specimen was the envy of all collectors; but their hope of securing it at any cost, if ever it came into the market, was baffled by the doctor bequeathing his treasure to the Louvre Museum. I remember having seen the dish exhibited in a special glass case in the faïence gallery, where it was the cynosure of all eyes. The centre of the huge piece was occupied by a large red lobster. This was well calculated to astonish the connoisseurs, for Palissy had never included the lobster among the "Bestioles" with which he was wont to adorn his ware; moreover, he was not known to have used a red colour on any other piece. Either for these reasons or for some other, doubts were, at last, entertained as to the genuineness of the piece, and it was carefully examined. A cut with a steel blade into its shining surface disclosed the unpalatable fact that the substance the dish was made of was mere mastic, while the supposed enamels were nothing else than varnish colours. The article was immediately transferred into the lumber room of the museum, where it is now resting in peace.

The name of Avisseau, of Tours, heads the list of those who presented, for the first time, an artistic pottery of their own, quite as attractive as the average productions of the old masters. Avisseau had served his apprenticeship as a potter and as a common faïence painter. In 1825 he was made manager of a small factory. Deeply dissatisfied with the drudgery he had to go through every day in the village pot-works, where nothing but the cheapest crocks were manufactured, he sighed for the day when he should find an opportunity of improving his knowledge and acquiring some practical ability. The direction his efforts were to take was determined by the sight of a fine Palissy dish that was one day shown to him. His surprise and admiration were unbounded; he had never suspected that so much refinement and beauty could be obtained on a piece made of

ordinary clay. The perusal of the romantic history of the potter of Saintes acted as a keen incentive to his mind. He formed the resolution of recovering the secrets that Palissy was said to have carried away with him to the grave, and to take no rest until that end had been achieved. Fifteen years, it is said, were spent in misdirected trials—years of trouble and misery—before he mastered at last the mystery of the coloured glazes.

The story of the harrowing difficulties he had to face for the sake of his art—a period of endless tribulations which made him, as it were, a second incarnation of the old French potter—was opportunely circulated; it contributed not a little to direct public attention to the first examples of ornamental pottery that Avisseau exhibited in 1845. A few years afterwards his fame was firmly established, and the most influential connoisseurs had taken his work under their patronage.

The modest house in which he lived and worked was situated in the vicinity of Tours, on the banks of the Loire; it was surrounded with a neat little garden, where the potter cultivated the plants and kept the small stock of living reptiles and insects he copied in the ornamentation of his ware; it was his pride to assert that nature alone inspired his conceptions and supplied his models. A son and a daughter, both talented modellers and painters, assisted him in his work. Visitors came from all parts to see the *atelier*, and make the acquaintance of the self-made artist, the ingenious craftsman who had had to discover anew the lost technical processes he required, before he could invest with the perfection of fictile form the quaint conceits of his imagination. A cordial welcome was extended to all; and it goes without saying that no one left the place without having secured, for adequate consideration, a memento of an interesting visit.

Avisseau's early facsimiles of Palissy ware are very superior to the pieces he made after his own design; these latter, which savour highly of the "romantique" taste of the period, strike

us as pretentious and extravagant. The Victoria and Albert Museum has a few examples of Avisseau faience; we notice that the glaze is thin and dull, and the colours pale and weak. It would be difficult to understand the cause of its success, if we did not bear in mind that, for a time, the maker remained alone in his speciality, and also that the pen of the art critic, which makes and unmakes transient reputations, had been particularly busy concerning the potter of Tours and his wonderful creations.

Pull was soon afterwards to enter into the path opened by Avisseau. He made the same pretensions to being a worthy successor of Palissy, and to having acquired his knowledge of pottery at the cost of many years spent in labours and disappointments. The new-comer stuck almost exclusively to the reproduction of the old models, and he executed his replicas with an accuracy that left little to be desired. Collectors may have cause to regret the perfection of the work; many of his copies have passed muster as original pieces, and it is as such that they have found a place in some of the finest collections. The art potters of the time had their show at the Agricultural and Industrial Exhibitions. On these occasions Pull easily distanced all his competitors. One of them, Barbizet, gave a more commercial turn to the business. He undertook to make "Palissys" for the million. For years small articles of his manufacture, decorated in the "rustic" style with shells, fishes and reptiles, and to be had at prices varying from a few sous to a few francs, filled the bazaars of the towns and the seaside shops. They had little ceramic value. Highly fusible glazes were running over an underfired biscuit; a bright scarlet red was added by the application of a solution of sealing-wax. Very few specimens of Barbizet's production, considerable as it was, have escaped destruction. They never entered the French collections. A few of them, however, have drifted into the minor museums of foreign countries, where I have seen them confidently labelled, "Palissy ware."

Greater difficulties had to be encountered, before satisfactory imitations of the various types of faïence with stanniferous enamel could be obtained, than had been the case with the making of embossed pottery coloured with variegated glazes. Not only were the processes of manufacture much more complicated, but the ware had to be fired in a regular oven, instead of a small muffle kiln—a costly requirement which placed the practice of the art out of the reach of many. It is true that to be enabled to produce a fair reproduction of the Nevers and Rouen faïence it was merely a question of settling the simple composition of the metallic colours used in the ancient factories; good white faïence with a fine enamel was still manufactured for the common trade, and the making of the ware had not, therefore, to trouble the would-be reproducer of old models. The first essays had been started, not by practical potters, but by artists who, although unacquainted with chemical manipulation, persisted in preparing with their own hands the colours they required. They were rather slow in arriving at a reliable result; but, as soon as they had secured the fewest possible pigments, they presented to an admiring and credulous public the "*faïence grand feu*" of which they claimed to be the inventors. As a matter of fact, their pieces were made after the design of the artist by a well-known manufacturer, who also fired the ware in his oven after it had received its decoration; but this course of action had been followed with great secrecy, and all the credit was given to the painter.

Ulysse, of Blois, was to the revival of painted faïence what Avisseau had been to that of the Palissy ware. His small works were also situated on the banks of the Loire. He made the ware himself on a small scale, and he had his circle of wealthy patrons, who encouraged and subsidised his experiments. The imitations of Nevers ware that he produced in the beginning of his career, and his trials of metallic lustre which promised to equal those seen on the Italian majolica, placed him in the first rank among the renovators of the ceramic art. In the same

town another probationer, of the name of Tortat, attracted momentary attention by his attempts to reproduce the Henry II. ware. If forgery was intended the maker cannot be accused of having ever carried it out—his imitations could not deceive anyone acquainted with the originals.

One of the most conspicuous figures of the irregulars engaged in the movement, and one from whom great things were expected, was the Italian, G. Devers. He came from Turin, and was said to be in possession of the secrets of the ancient majolists. A short course of study in the *ateliers* of the most celebrated painters and sculptors of Paris completed his artistic education; he was then fully armed to begin the campaign.

He expounded, with southern verbosity, his theory on the introduction of enamelled faïence in architectural decoration; the forcible exposition of his schemes found many listeners and not a few actual supporters. It was rumoured that the mantle of Andrea della Robbia had fallen upon his shoulders, and that the man only wanted an occasion to decorate a whole building to show what could be done by a well-conceived association of coloured plastic work with the other resources of modern architecture. Encouragement from private friends and from higher quarters was not wanting. Devers received a commission to execute sets of decorative panels in painted faïence for the adornment of some public monuments then in course of erection. Inconsiderable as it was, the task was more than he could achieve. His panels proved a decided failure. As he had in reality very limited experience as a potter, and no talent as an artist, he had to depend for the manufacture of his large pieces on the slab-and-stove makers of the "Rue de la Roquette," and for the painting of each article upon such casual journeymen painters as were willing to work for him. No good work could possibly be produced under such conditions. An inspection of the shanty in which he worked and where he kept the results of his empiric experiments would have enlightened any unbiassed observer as to the extent of Devers' ceramic

abilities. All the worst faults that can disfigure a piece of pottery badly made, badly painted, and badly fired, were amply represented on his trials. One could scarcely understand the reason of such a distressing exhibition, unless it were to impress the visitor with the sense of the innumerable difficulties the great potter had to contend with. His reputation in Paris came to an end on the first occasion in which the validity of his pretensions was put to a crucial test. Devers returned to Italy, where, on the strength of his Parisian success, he was appointed to a professorship of ceramic art.

Such were the men on whose achievements the hopes of the revival of the art were centred at that moment.

Modesty was certainly not one of the failings of any of those who were fighting their way to the front. From a printed notice, published by one of the most enterprising leaders, named Gaidan, we extract what follows: "Everybody is bound to acknowledge that I have raised myself to the highest position among the makers of artistic pottery. My discoveries are so numerous that one might refuse to believe that they are the fruit of the efforts of a single man, but my fame is now so well established that my talent and my success are recognised by all," and much more of it, in the same strain. This must not be considered as the bombastic advertisement of a charlatan wanting to throw dust in the eyes of the public; Gaidan was a good potter in his way. It was the candid expression of the high opinion he entertained of his own merit; he saw no reason why anyone should differ from it. With few exceptions, all those who then meddled with pot-making displayed an equal measure of ludicrous vanity.

So far the regular manufacturer had remained quite unconcerned with the progress that was being made entirely through the exertions of outsiders. He was quite willing to sell white faïence to the artists and let them fire their work in his ovens; but he took no trouble to help them out of their technical difficulties and blunders. The whole thing was to him a foolish

fancy, from which no profitable business could ever be derived. Yet it was only when the manufacturer became alive to the advantage that would accrue to him from working hand in hand with artists, and placing better processes at their disposal, that the making of artistic pottery began its course of sound improvements and entered the high road to success.

At Bourg-la-Reine, a few miles from Paris, Laurin was manufacturing plain but sound stanniferous faïence. The Laurins were chips of the old block; the methods that their fathers had followed were preserved by them in their integrity. They sold dishes, plaques, and vases to all those who liked to try their hand at faïence painting. Amateurs and artists came there in preference, knowing that they would get good biscuit and fine glaze. One of the difficulties connected with this style of painting is that, to be quite successful, it must be executed on the dusty coat of powdered enamel adhering to the surface of the ware before any firing, except of the clay, takes place. This rendered the carriage of pieces prepared for decoration a rather delicate affair. On this account a few of the regular customers were allowed to work in the factory, and were also given facilities to see their work through the firing and place their trials in the oven. From this constant association of labours arose a community of interest between the manufacturer and the artist; so, instead of remaining isolated and divergent, researches and improvements became collective and co-efficient.

No one among the frequenters of the Laurins' works showed such an aptitude for solving technical problems and removing stumbling blocks from the path of the faïence painter as E. Lessore. He soon brought the composition of glazes and metallic colours to the point at which they were most bright and intense, and his brush was uncommonly skilful in bringing out charming effects from their harmonious combinations. His style marked a frank departure from the imitation of the ancient types. A rapid outline sketch in pure manganese, relieved with occasional patches of blue, yellow and green, con-

stituted his usual scheme of colour. The essays he made for the production of ruby lustre were also very successful; but although his lustre was easily obtained upon a white piece, he could never fire any other colours in association with it. He laid especial stress on the technical excellence of his work, and did not trouble much about the originality of his designs. The Lessore faïence is, with a few unimportant exceptions, painted with very free renderings of ancient engravings. Laurin offered him a permanent engagement, which he accepted and kept for a few years; by far his best works belong to that period of his life. He left to join the Imperial manufactory of Sèvres. But his rough and sketchy style did not suit dainty porcelain; the eccentricity and independence of his ways could not accommodate themselves to the exigencies of an officially conducted establishment, so this ill-assorted connection was shortly severed, to the advantage of both parties. He then resolved to try his fortune in England. Talent was sure of a hearty welcome at the factory of Messrs. Minton, and Lessore was at once admitted to make preliminary experiments. His work was much admired, but did not offer any of the attractive qualities that would insure a large patronage; the conditions that could be offered to him fell short of the expectations he had formed; he therefore retired highly disappointed from Minton's works, and made arrangements with the firm of Messrs. Josiah Wedgwood and Sons. After having worked at Etruria for a few years, still troubled by his insatiable longing for change of place, he obtained from his employers permission to return to his cottage at Marlotte, near Fontainebleau, and there he decorated the ware that was sent to him from England in large consignments. This agreement lasted up to the time of his death. English collectors are well acquainted with Lessore's faïence paintings. They all show a good understanding of colour and effect; the treatment is remarkably bold and spirited. No special example, however, could be singled out from his countless

productions as a true model of ceramic art. He was so fully impressed with the idea that a piece of faïence was above all an article of trade, and that a ceramic artist had to turn out an immense quantity of work if he wanted to make a living out of it, that he never attempted to surpass himself and execute the masterpiece that no artist ever fails to perfect, on certain occasions, for the love of his art and the sake of his reputation. The earthenware Lessore has painted in, or for, England discloses this constant pre-occupation for rapidity of execution and cheapness of cost even more than the pieces he produced in his own country.

Chapelet was one of the pupils whom Lessore trained at Bourg-la-Reine. He painted in the style of his master, and was for long the chief artist attached to Laurins' works. To him was due the introduction of a process destined to have a success as sudden and complete as it was to be short-lived, viz: "Barbotine painting." It consisted in mixing fusible colours with clay and opaque substances, so that they could be employed in any degree of thickness; the sharpness of the artist's touch was not impaired by the firing; when completed, the work had the appearance of an oil painting. Artists patronised with enthusiasm a process which seemed to offer unbounded resources. At Haviland's porcelain works, where Chapelet imported it, it found the most clever exponents. I remember the days when, on the stands of a ceramic exhibition, or in the windows of a fashionable china shop, all the best places were occupied by dishes and vases painted in "Barbotine." This likeness to oil painting, so highly praised in the new method, was precisely the cause of its falling rapidly into discredit. The effect was not truly ceramic. Within a couple of years every piece of "Barbotine" had discreetly disappeared from all the places where they had, for a short season, figured with so much honour. Chapelet gave up painting to devote all his time to the research for technical novelties. His name

must always be remembered in connection with the first essays of "rouge flambé," and also with the production of a large variety of coloured glazes, blended in marbling, sprinkling and veining, of all possible and impossible hues.

Michel Bouquet, the landscape painter, was never attached to the Laurin factory; but as he brought his work there to be fired, he was, to some extent, connected with the place. I have no hesitation in saying that a plaque by M. Bouquet stands apart from all ceramic painting of every description as embodying, in an almost perfect form, the notion of using ordinary vitrifiable colours in the rendering of purely pictorial subjects. The treatment is highly finished, but without undue minuteness; delicate shades are skilfully contrasted with powerful tints; the general effect is always true to nature. If we compare it with a valued canvas, the plaque will hold its own and lose nothing of its intrinsic qualities; but it does not suggest any pretension to an imitation of oil painting. Owing to the true method employed in its execution—which consists in painting upon the white enamel, in the powdery state, with the elementary metallic pigments which alone can stand the oven's fire—it retains an absolutely ceramic character.

Bouquet was a constant exhibitor at the Paris Salon. His work has remained in private hands, and is never seen in the trade. Neglected as his plaques may be at the present day, they have only to be better known to be appreciated as they deserve. The time is not far removed when the task of illustrating with adequate examples the phases of a highly interesting revival will be taken in hand by appreciative collectors. Bouquet's landscapes on faïence will then be eagerly sought after as representing the most striking instance of the old processes having yielded results undreamed of by the ancients, when cleverly handled by a modern painter.

Gustave Noël, another ceramic artist, followed, later on, in the same track; he has left many realistic landscapes

executed in an equally legitimate manner, and not unworthy of notice. For years Noël held periodic sales in Paris, in which the current work left on his hands was disposed of by auction.

It is not possible to enumerate all the artists and amateurs who, at some time in their career, used the Laurins' faïence and had their work fired in their ovens. Special mention must be made, however, of two gifted ladies—Madame Moreau-Nélaton, whose fanciful productions were much admired, and Madame Escalier, who found the highest expression of her truly decorative feelings in the painting of bold and effective flowers upon broad dishes and large vases.

Above the names of all those who contributed in various degree to the advance of the art, that of the potter Theodore Deck stands out conspicuously. His achievements summed up and crowned all the partial progress individually made in the collective movement. If a consistent association of technical superiority with an incomparable display of artistic excellence constitutes the highest form of ceramic art, I venture to say that it is in a choice piece of Deck's faïence that one may look for the nearest approach to ideal perfection. The Persian potter, with his amazing command over the magic of colour, has never obtained anything that surpasses the gem-like effects produced by a happy combination of the bright, *chatoyant* and harmonious enamels used by Theodore Deck; in addition to this, no supercilious art critic could look down on one of Deck's decorative panels as a merely commercial article; in the hands of his talented collaborators, faïence painting ceased to be one of the minor arts; the restrictions imposed upon the artist by the limitations of the process detract nothing from the final merit of his work.

Deck was a self-made man in the best sense of the word. At the end of his apprenticeship in a stove factory at Strasburg, he started on foot to visit the pottery works of the north of Europe, and by taking temporary employment in the best

establishments, he acquired a consummate knowledge of all branches of the trade. He came to Paris, where, for a few years, he acted as foreman to the important manufactory of slabs and earthenware stoves of Madame Dumas. But his budding ambition could not rest satisfied with a dependent situation. A designer and modeller of no common taste, if not of much acquired talent, he dreamed of breaking away from obsolete traditions and creating a new style of pottery better calculated to answer the artistic tendencies of the moment. He was impressed with the idea that a complete transformation of the potter's art could only be effected by enlisting into the service of the cause the interest and assistance of the most talented among the young painters of the day. He also knew that to gain this end it was imperative that technical means very superior to those employed in the trade should be placed at the disposal of the artist. For a long time he toiled in silence and secrecy, and gradually mastered the composition of new bodies and glazes which permitted the use of a variety of colours embracing all degrees of delicacy and intensity. It was in the Persian and Rhodian faïence, the first specimens of which had just come under general notice, that he found the fundamental notions on which he meant to establish a completely new style of manufacture.

Not only did he succeed in producing turquoises and azure blues, warm greens, dark purples and scarlet reds equal to those seen laid in flat tints on the the Rhodian ware, but he found the way of blending these colours to serve the purposes of the figure painter.

A dilapidated store-house on the Boulevard Montparnasse had been hastily turned into a workshop; it contained the indispensable potter's wheel, a few tables and benches, and two small kilns standing at the far end. There, every weekday, Deck was at work with his brother, throwing, turning, decorating, and firing a small stock of vases and dishes. On Sundays a few young and friendly artists, all of the Bohemian persuasion,

assembled in the extempore *atelier*, anxious to see the results obtained in the last firing, and ready to make more trials with ceramic colours. It was a hard day's work, interrupted only by the luncheon hour, a pleasant interval in which capital jokes were cracked, and cheap wine freely imbibed by the witty and cheerful party. At the end of the day each painter had covered with a light sketch of his own invention a vase or a plate; a mere suggestion of decorative effects which might be, later on, more fully brought out in a finished piece. Such were the modest beginnings of the greatest of all French potters.

The earliest outcome of the unprecedented collaboration of a practical man of Deck's stamp with artists who, like Hamon, Ranvier, Hermann, Hancker, and others, united accomplished talent to natural originality, could not fail to take the amateurs' world by surprise. The success of Deck's faïence was sudden and immense.

It is needless to say that the working capital of the enterprise was meagre in the extreme. But by the geniality of his manners, the straightforwardness and honesty of his dealings, the leader had won the confidence and friendship of all those who worked in association with him. His painters were satisfied to wait for the remuneration of their work until the advent of an eventual purchaser. Owing to these conditions, and notwithstanding the scantiness of his financial resources, Deck had his small show-room always full of remarkable works of art which, under ordinary circumstances, could not have been brought together without an enormous outlay. Up to the end his transactions with artists were subject to a similar settlement.

Without the assistance of foreign capital, as business was steadily increasing, the premises were enlarged; the humble workshop developed into a spacious manufactory. Deck assumed an unrivalled position among the makers of artistic pottery growing every day more numerous. His style of manufacture

was imitated by many, but the high standard of his productions was never approached. Artists of great repute did not disdain to display their talents upon his matchless faïence; the making of plaques and dishes worth as much as four or five hundred pounds was a common occurrence, and enthusiastic amateurs were not slow in securing possession of them. The reward was equal to the results achieved; no other potter has, perhaps, during his lifetime enjoyed such a well-deserved and universal fame. His appointment as director of the national factory of Sèvres, a position that no practical potter had occupied before him, added official sanction to his public success. Death carried him away, unfortunately, before he had time to carry out the changes and improvements he intended to introduce in the conduct of the national establishment.

Entering into competition with Deck for the imitation of Persian faïence, several manufacturers took their inspiration from the same sources. A. de Beaumont and Collinot, and later on Parvillier, greatly extended the making of tiles, panels, and decorative objects chiefly intended for architectural purposes, all painted in the Oriental style. Ornamental and elegant as were the designs, the ware itself lacked the technical superiority that Deck alone could impart to the body, the glazes, and the colours. These enterprises, well patronised at the outset, lasted but a few years, and collapsed without having yielded what was expected of them.

Brief also were the days of many smaller establishments that a passing fashion had brought into existence. I may briefly mention the faïence of Jean, which purported to imitate Italian majolica, and was painted over the glaze with designs not always in classical taste. An immense quantity of it was manufactured and sold. Genlis and Rudhart produced a white ware much appreciated for the brilliancy of its glaze and the delicacy of a decoration traced in pale blue after the Moustiers style.

A reference to the catalogues of the universal exhibitions

shows how numerous are the names of the potter-artists, now forgotten, who profited by a momentary success.

I purposely refrain from speaking of the regular manufacturers who stood then at the head of the trade, and still occupy the same honourable position, joining the making of artistic pottery to the manufacture of domestic ware. Anything I might attempt to introduce concerning their productions would either carry me away too far or be altogether inadequate. I may have to apologise for having devoted so many pages to the modern revival of faïence painting in an account which was intended to deal only with the history of old French faïence.

MARKS
OF THE
FRENCH FAÏENCE.

NEVERS.

1 

Conrad
Anevers

H. B

4 1689.

5 N

2 deconrade
a
nevers

6 F. R. 17 34.

3 DLF
1636

7 S

DIJON.

MEILLONAS.

Dijon


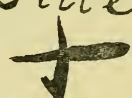
A

NEVERS.—(1-2) MARKS OF THE CONRADES. (3) DENIS LEFÈVRE. (4) HENRI BORNE (1690). (5) NICOLAS VIODE (1700). (6) FRANÇOIS RODRIGUE (1715). (7) JACQUES SEIGNE (1726).

DIJON.

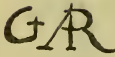

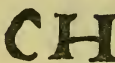

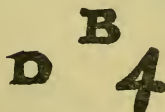
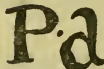


MEILLONAS.

ROUEN.

- | | | | |
|---|---|----|---|
| 1 | faict a Rouen
1647 | 7 | va uasseur
a. Rouan |
| 2 | P3 | 8 | Vd |
| 3 |  | 9 | W.... |
| | fr 3 | 10 | Gille
 |
| 4 | Dieul | 11 | Borne ((|
| | | | Pixit ((|
| 5 | Hilaire
1739 | | Anno ((|
| | | | 1738 |
| 6 | Mrs Guillibeaux | 12 | GLD |

ROUEN.—(1) MANUFACTURE OF EDME POTERAT. (2) LOUIS POTERAT (?). (3) FLEUR-DE-LYS MARK. (4) DIEUL, PAINTER (1756). (5) HILAIRE, PAINTER. (6, 12) GUILLIBEAUX, MANUFACTURER. (7-8) LEVAVASSEUR, MANUFACTURER. (9) VALLET BROTHERS (?). (10) GILLE, PAINTER. (11) BORNE, PAINTER. (21)

ROUEN.

13		19	
14		20	
15		21	
16		22	
17		23	
18		24	

ROUEN.—PAINTERS' MARKS, STILL UNDETERMINED, FOUND ON THE ROUEN
FAÏENCE.

SAINT CLOUD.

ScT

†
S.C
I

PARIS.

Present. fait
Par ^{MR} frapart. A
M^r. Boulange'

SINCENY. 1702

1 -S. 3, Dominique. pelleve 1749

2 2

4 B. T.

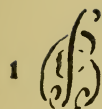
5 S.C.ij

SAINT CLOUD.—TROU.

PARIS.—INSCRIPTION ON A PAINTED DISH.

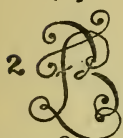
SINCENY.—(3) DOMINIQUE PELLEVE, DIRECTOR OF THE FACTORY.

LILLE

1 

6 

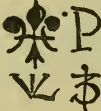
4 N.A:
DOREZ.

2 

LILLE
J 767

1748

3 Lille

5 

7 

8 

VALENCIENNES





SAINT-AMAND-LES-EAUX

1 

4

S.A

2 

5



3 

6 St. amand
(le 5 novembre 1748)

LILLE.—(1, 2, 3, 6) FRANÇOIS BOUSSEMARY. (4) NICOLAS ALEXIS DOREZ.
(5) LEFÈVRE AND PETIT.

VALENCIENNES.—FRANÇOIS LOUIS DOREZ.

SAINT-AMAND-LES-EAUX.—(1, 2) PIERRE FAUQUEZ.

MOUSTIERS

¹ & Fℓ Gf

² ℓ ℓ .Oy. L.C.

³ A M ⁴ B B

⁵ Eℓ A F B.F

⁶ F'd F.P P.F f'd

MOUSTIERS.—(1) CLÉRISSY AND J. FOUQUES. GASPARD FOUQUES. (2) OLÉRY. LANGIER AND CHAIX. (3) ACHARD AND MILLE. (4) BOUDIL AND SON. (5) ETIENNE, ANTOINE, AND LOUIS FERRAT. (6) FERBAUD AND HIS SONS.

ARDUS

¹ D

² fait a
ardus pres
montauban
le 14^e may
1752
ruelle Pichon

MONTAUBAN

L

ℙ

CLERMONT

FERRAND

Clermont f^o
m

SAMADET

Samadet 1732

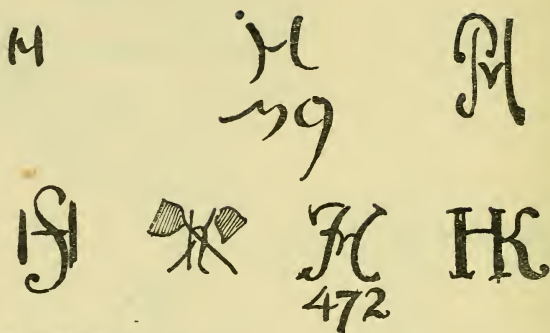
ARDUS.—(1) DUPRÉ, PAINTER. (2) LOUISE RUELLE PICHON, MANUFACTURER
AND PAINTER.

MONTAUBAN.—(1) LAPIERRE. (2) LAPIERRE AND QUINQUIRY.

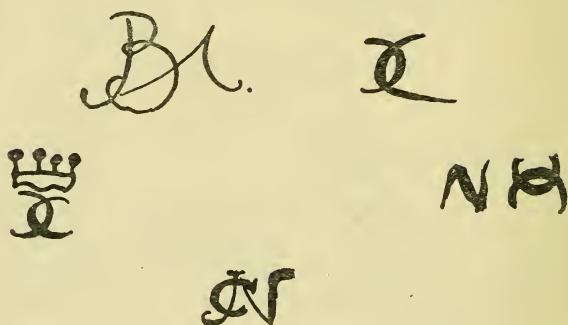
CLERMONT-FERRAND.

SAMADET.

STRASBURG



NIDERVILLER.



STRASBURG.—MARKS OF THE HANNONGS.

NIDERVILLER.—DE BEYERLÉ. COMTE DE CUSTINE.

MARSEILLES.

1

A. Clerissy
à S^r Jean -
du desert 1697
à marseille -

2



R³ Robert at Marseille

4

Jacques Bonelly

5



6



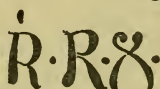
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8



9


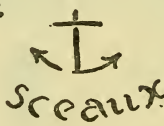
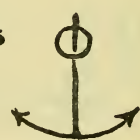


MARSEILLES.—ANTOINE CLÉRISSY. (2) HONORÉ SAVY. (3, 8, 9) JOSEPH ROBERT. (4, 6) JACQUES BORELLY. (5) VEUVE PERRIN. (7) FAUCHIEZ.

LA ROCHELLE

¹ **IB3** ² *La Rochelle*

SCEAUX

¹ *SP*
 ²  ³ 

APREY

¹ *APJ* ² *AP*
⁴ *AF* ⁵ *PA* ⁶ *RG*

LA ROCHELLE.—(1) DE BRIQUEVILLE.

SCEAUX.—(1) SCEAUX—PENTHIÈVRES.

APREY.—MARKS OF JARBY AND OTHER PAINTERS.

RENNES

¹ CHOISY F^T

² fait
à Rennes

Rüe hüe

1769

³ fait à Rennes

Rüe hüe

1774

NANTES

QUIMPER

I. R. PALVADÉAV

HB

1643

SAINT OMER

H

VRON

W

DOUAI

Leigh & C^{ie}

RENNES.—(1) HIREL DE CHOISY. (2, 3) MICHEL DERENNES.

QUIMPER.—LA HUBEAUDIÈRE.

NANTES.—NAME INSCRIBED ON A PIECE ATTRIBUTED TO NANTES.

SAINT OMER.

VRON.—VERLINGUE.

DOUAI.

Glossary.

Agate or marbled ware. Pottery made of various coloured clays, mingled together so as to give something of the effect of banded agate. Made at Apt and Castellet in imitation of the Staffordshire productions (*see* p. 94).

Armorial faïence. Table services decorated with the armorial bearings of noble families, religious houses, etc. These form a distinctive class of the faïence produced at Rouen, Lille, Nevers, Paris, Bordeaux, etc. (*see* pp. 9, 67, 68, 77 and 96).

Black basalt. A hard black stoneware perfected by Josiah Wedgwood, and imitated by several French potters (*see* p. 78).

Body or paste. The mixture of clays and earths from which any article of clay is fashioned.

✓ **"Broderies."** A class of patterns, invented at Rouen, and thence copied at many of the later French factories, based on the current embroidery patterns of the day.

Cockspurs. Small pieces of refractory pottery having sharp points, used to support the ware during firing. Indentations or marks under the piece often show where they have been used (*see* p. 119).

Colours. Only mineral substances can be used in painting faïence owing to the temperature at which they must be fired. The earlier French faïence was decorated with shades of blue, green, yellow, orange, violet, and at Rouen and sparingly elsewhere with a fine Indian red. These colours were painted on the coating of stanniferous glaze before it was fired, and were fired sufficiently to become incorporated with it. Later, following the method of Strasburg, other colours were produced, notably the gold-purples, carmines, and rose colours, in which a fluxed colour was painted on the previously fired stanniferous glaze, and refired at a temperature not much above dull red heat, which served to fasten the colour on the glaze without remelting the latter.

✓ **"Coperta."** The final film of lead glaze put on the later Italian Majolica painting, which acted like a varnish and increased the brilliance of the colours. This practice was not followed in France.

Crazing. Fine cracks in the glaze of any variety of pottery, indicating a want of agreement between the glaze and the body.

Cream colour. A name often used for the slightly yellowish-earthenware perfected in Staffordshire in the first half of the eighteenth century.

Delft ware. The faïence so largely produced in Holland, and particularly in Delft during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in imitation of Oriental porcelain. It had a great influence on the faïence produced in the Northern French factories, as well as in those of England.

Enamel. The term should be restricted to a glaze rendered opaque by oxide of tin. The ordinary white glaze of French faïence is thus, strictly speaking, an enamel. Among potters the word is loosely used for the colours that are painted only on a fired glaze.

Enamelling. Technically, painting in enamel or on-glaze colours.

English Earthenware. The ware differs from French faïence in almost every particular. The body is white throughout its substance, and glazed with a transparent glaze. On its introduction into France it was readily copied, and ultimately superseded stanniferous faïence. Such wares are commonly known in France as "Faïence fine," "Cailloutage," or "Terre-de-Pipe."

"Faïence." Strictly, pottery formed of clays burning to a light red or yellow colour, covered with a lead glaze rendered opaque by the addition of oxide of tin. The word is now used in a general sense to indicate all the pottery of greater artistic pretence than common crocks, and not sufficiently vitrified by fire as to rank as stoneware or porcelain. It is thus practically synonymous with our word earthenware.

"Faïence au reverbère." Another term for faïence decorated with enamel colours, so called because the colours are fired in a muffle kiln (four a reverbère).

"Faïence fine." The French term used for such wares as English earthenware, cream colour, etc., which have now replaced the older stanniferous faïence.

"Faïence-porcelaine." The later porcelains decorated with on-glaze colours so as to give the appearance or effect of the more expensive porcelain (*see* pp. 107, 112, 119 and 120).

"Faïences Japonées." A trade term applied to the French faïence decorated with patterns taken from Japanese and Chinese porcelain.

"Faïences patriotiques." The commoner forms of French faïence produced in large quantities during the Revolutionary period, and coarsely decorated with topical cartoons and inscriptions (*see* pp. 12 and 54).

- Flux.** A very fusible glass, generally rich in lead, which is added to colouring materials or gold to fuse them into the glaze or stanniferous enamel, which has been previously fired at a higher temperature than such colours will endure.
- ✓ **Galena Glaze.** The primitive form of pottery glaze, obtained by dusting powdered lead ore (galena) on the clay ware before firing (*see* p. 3).
- Glaze.** The vitreous coating of pottery generally (*see* also Stanniferous glaze).
- ✓ **“Grès de Thiviers.”** A ferruginous sandstone found at Thiviers, in Périgord. As found, it is of a yellow colour, but when fired it becomes a solid and beautiful red, which can be used as a pigment on pottery (*see* p. 70).
- **Impasto.** Clay or enamel colours laid so thickly on to the ware as to stand up in relief from its surface; *s.c.*—The so-called Persian patterns produced at Nevers in white enamel on a blue ground.
- ✶ **“Lambrequins.”** The scalloped radiating designs originated at Rouen, and thence adopted at most of the later French faïence factories.
- Lead Glazes.** Glazes which are rendered more easily fusible by reason of their containing a considerable proportion of lead oxide. In this sense all faïence glazes are lead glazes, though the term is generally applied only to the transparent varieties.
- Majolica.** Strictly, this term should be applied only to the painted and lustred faïences of Italy, but it is often used in a wider sense to cover all the ware, made or decorated, in the Italian manner.
- ✶ **Majolist.** A potter working with the methods or after the manner of the Italian majolica makers.
- ✓ **Marzacotto.** A term used by the Italian majolica makers for the potash glass used as a flux. Sometimes it contained lead in addition, and could then be used as a final glaze or “coperta” (*q.v.*).
- ✶ **“Peinture sur émail cru.”** The earlier form of faïence painting in which the mineral colours were painted directly on the powdery glaze-coating before it was fired. The colours and the white stanniferous glaze were therefore fired at one operation (*c.f.* Colours).
- ✶ **“Peinture sur émail cuit.”** On-glaze painting. The pigments mixed with a flux were painted on the fired glaze, and then refired at a lower temperature (*c.f.* Colours).
- ✓ **“Poncifs.”** Perforated paper patterns by which a design could be “pounced” on to the ware as a guide in painting.

Queen's ware. The name given by Wedgwood to his improved cream colour when he made a service for Queen Caroline.

Slip. The thick liquid obtained by mixing clay or any body-mixture with water.

Soft porcelain. A name given to artificial glassy porcelain, the famous *pâte tendre* of the French, because it can be readily abraded by a file, while Oriental porcelain cannot.

✓ **"Sopra Bianco."** A charming method of decoration, in which an ornamental device is painted in white enamel, etc., on a ground but slightly removed from it in tone (*see also* p. 83).

Stanniferous Glaze, or enamel. The glaze of the old French faïence, as well as of Delft and similar wares, in which a lead glaze is rendered milky-white and opaque by the addition of a considerable proportion of oxide of tin. This serves at once to hide the natural colour of the yellow or red body, and gives a charming ground for the display of painted decoration.

"Terra Sigillata." A fine white earth, probably an impure kaolin, sold in stamped tablets as a kind of universal panacea. It was extensively used by the Greeks and Romans, and its use persisted throughout Europe down to the eighteenth century. Palissy and other French potters knew of it, and used it in their experiments (*see* p. 35).

✓ **"Terre de Lorainne."** Impressed mark on many Lunéville figures made from a local white clay (*see* p. 114).

✓ **"Terre de Pipe."** Earthenware after the English fashion.

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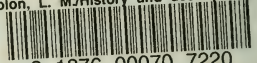






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